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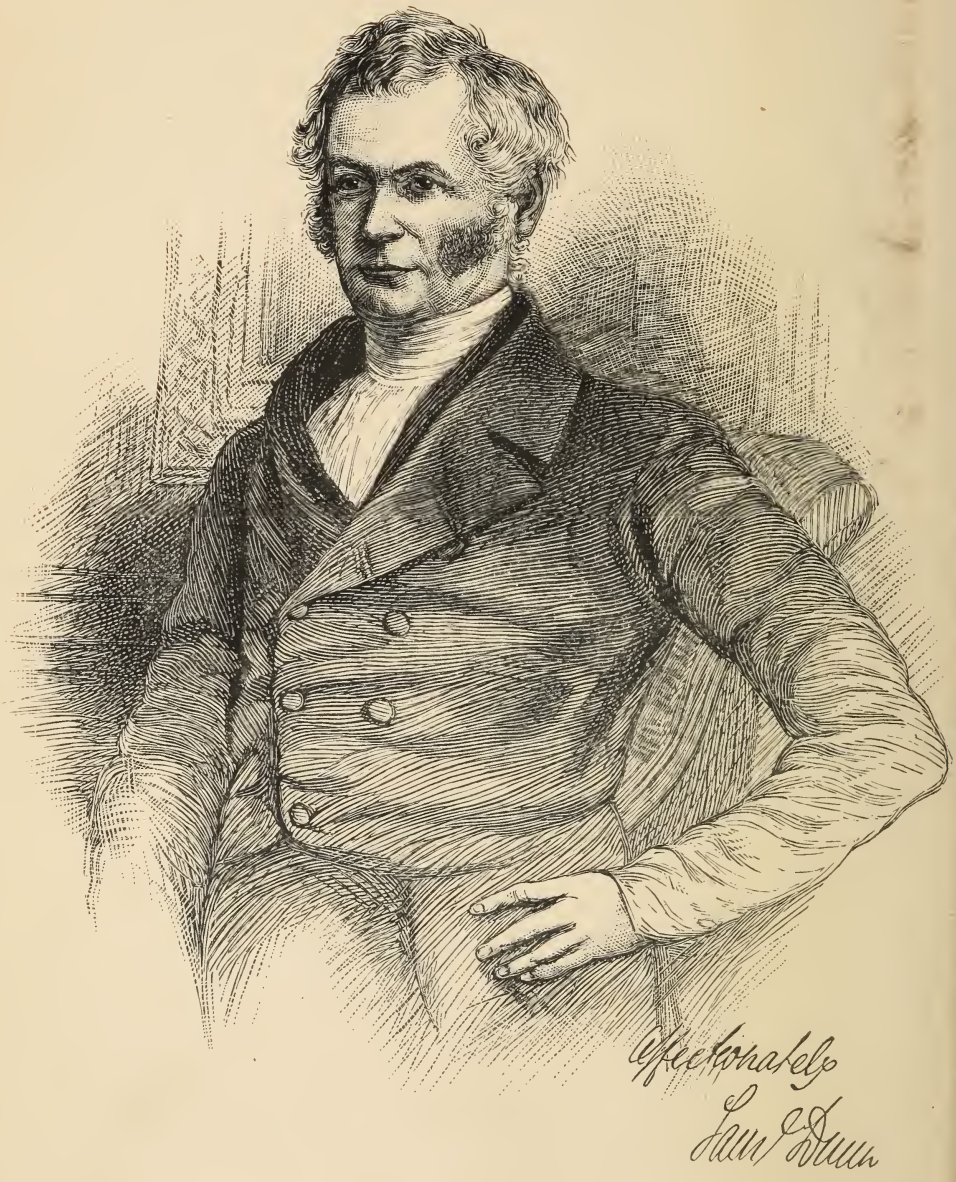
"THE TRANSFIGURATION"

AND OTHER SERMONS.


Yours truly
Sam'l Dunn

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"THE TRANSFIGURATION,"

And other Sermons,

BY THE LATE

VENERABLE SAMUEL DUNN,

Of the Methodist Episcopal Church, New York East Conference.

WITH A

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF HIS LIFE

BY THE

REV. J. DUNN DINNICK.

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PREFACE.

IT has long been recognised in Methodist circles that it was due to the high character and sterling qualities of the revered Samuel Dunn that his grandly-conceived sermons and a record of his still grander work should be handed down to posterity for the emulation of those who are following on. No apology is, therefore, needed for the publication of this book, in so far, at least, as the collection of sermons is concerned. Their merit commends themselves; and I leave them for the perusal of the public, well assured that that part of the volume will meet with the highest appreciation. I confess, however, with reference to the accompanying sketch of the old Methodist's life, that I approached the task with a feeling closely akin to trepidation. Mr. Dunn's was so great, so noble a character, so transcendently superior to many of his contemporaries, that it was perhaps presumptuous on my part to attempt an outline of so grand a life from the scrappy and meagre details at my disposal. I considered, however, and others echoed my opinion, that it was fitting that a sketch of his life, if brief and incomplete, should be published in consort with his brilliant and Scriptural sermons, and knowing the old-time Methodist intimately, his methods of work and mode of living; and ardently admiring as I did his nobility of character, capabilities and life-work, I have ventured to give a curtailed biographical sketch. It is not my intention that the sketch shall be regarded as anything

but a brief general *resumé*, written to give an idea or insight into the life of one of the most revered, most admired, and certainly one of the most successful ministers ever associated with Methodism. Materials may hereafter be forthcoming sufficient to furnish a fairly exhaustive account of the life of this venerable minister, notwithstanding his reticence concerning himself and his accomplishments. When it appears, the religious world will probably receive it with gladness, for Samuel Dunn, as preacher, moralist, worker, thinker and author, was one of those men of whom it may be said we may never "look upon his like again."

JOHN DUNN DINNICK.

Brighton, *September*, 1890.

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A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF THE LATE

VENERABLE REV. SAMUEL DUNN.

VERY few men have attained an altitude in Methodism equal to that of the Rev. Samuel Dunn, either as a preacher, theologian, or evangelist. He was born at Mevagissey, a seaport situated six miles south of St. Austell, on the margin of the sea, in the English Channel. It is encircled by an extensive bay, whose cliffs and jutting headlands are so picturesque that a celebrated artist once stated that he could remain years on the spot and find his whole time occupied with fresh objects of beauty suitable for his brush.

The town is very ancient. Its name is to be found in records reaching far back into the twilight of modern history. The inhabitants ever possessed strong characteristics and are known for their pushing, restless, energetic lives; priding themselves more on daring, hazardous deeds than on monetary benefits.

John Wesley, who visited Mevagissey in 1753, speaking of the inhabitants, says, 'The men were like lions.'

Dr. Adam Clarke was appointed to this Circuit in 1784. The excellency of his character and his successful labours endeared him to the hearts of the people of Mevagissey, and a deep and lasting affection existed between him and the Dunn family.

The father of Samuel Dunn was a ship captain, remarkable for his intrepidity and self-command in a storm or when exposed to any danger. One interesting trait of his character was remembered with gratitude by Dr. Adam Clarke to the very close of his life. During the Doctor's early itinerancy in Guernsey he was assaulted by a ferocious mob, but was nobly and successfully protected by Captain Dunn and his valiant crew. Ever afterwards Captain Dunn was denominated by the Doctor his 'Guardian Angel.' The Doctor would often narrate this incident when dwelling retrospectively on the scenes of his

eventful life; and it is possible that something of the almost fatherly affection which, in later years, he was wont to entertain towards the young minister, Samuel Dunn, might derive its warmth and steadfastness from the unfading impress of the Captain's deed of daring love. Samuel Dunn's early childhood was spent peacefully enough. Throughout his life he always evinced a strong affection for his mother. The following circumstance fully illustrates this, as also that determination of purpose which was one of his special characteristics.

At an early age, under the care of his uncle, Stephen Dunn, he was sent to Wadham House School, Liskeard. His uncle accompanied him, and having delivered the customary injunction, was in turn accompanied as far as the centre of the town by his nephew on his homeward journey. Having there bade Sammy farewell, he naturally supposed that he would immediately return to the school. That, however, was not the youth's intention. A strong desire had arisen to see his mother and he could not quell the impulse. Leaving his uncle he darted across the fields to make for Mevagissey; but, after a sharp run, he had, from fatigue, to rest and recoup his strength. His uncle, taking the road, soon reached the spot where Sammy sat tired and jaded, and naturally surveyed the now sobbing boy with surprise mingled perhaps with dissatisfaction. Interrogating the little fellow as to the cause of his presence there, the tearful answer came that he 'wanted to see his mother.' To retrace his steps then he could not, business at home was urgent. To leave the boy on a strange country road he dare not, so taking him up on his horse and pityingly wiping the perspiration and tears from his face, he brought him back to Mevagissey. The surprise of his parents was great, to be followed by a greater the next day. His father determined that he should return with him the next morning, but little Samuel was on the quay among the fishermen very early enquiring what time it would be 'high water.' Learning that the tide would be high about 10 o'clock, he climbed over the rocks, made his way under the cliff, and rested on a prominent rock, which would be surrounded, but not covered, at high tide. On this craggy spot he perched himself like a sparrow on the house-top. A hue and cry was raised for him in the little town, and it was not until near noon that he

was discovered by the fishermen, who brought him off in a boat; but he had accomplished his object—it was then too late to proceed to Liskeard. In relating this when eighty-two years of age, he concluded: 'I had one more day with my mother; but was I not a naughty little boy?'

After he had left school he resided in St. Austell, where, in the spring of 1814, as in other parts of Cornwall, there was 'a great revival.' It was in this revival he was converted.

Speaking of this period, and the commencement of his ministerial career, he says: 'At sixteen years of age I joined the Wesleyan Methodist Society, and soon took part in the establishment of Sunday Schools in the towns of St. Austell, Mevagissey and Garren-Haven, and while still in my teens I was called to preach the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and before I attained full age, entered the general work of the ministry.'

To the distinguished Samuel Drew, the metaphysician, he was greatly indebted for counsel and encouragement; and by him was treated as one of his own family.

On leaving St. Austell in 1816, Samuel Dunn was followed by the regrets and affections of a wide circle of friends, who testified their attachment, Christian love and esteem, by the presentation to him of a testimonial.

It was in 1819 that he presented himself for examination for the ministry to the intelligent and excellent Rev. Richard Treffry, a minister who occupied a high place in his esteem and affection, and whose funeral sermon and memoir he afterwards published. (See Sermon No. X. in this volume.)

In 1822, at the London Conference, he alone, of the four hundred ministers present, offered himself as the first Methodist missionary to the Shetland Isles.

The discriminating judgment of the President of the Conference, Dr. Adam Clarke, pronounced him to have a clear call to that mission, and he accordingly proceeded thither. During his sojourn on these dreary islands, he fulfilled the self-denying duties with such earnest devotion and success that he was pronounced to be 'the Apostle of the Shetland Isles.' There, under the auspices of the Doctor, he laboured for three years with unvarying and remarkable success.

He heroically endured the greatest hardships, and often privations; and his constitution received such a very serious shaking through his laborious efforts that the greatest fears were entertained among his friends as to his recovery. Like his Divine Master, he toiled much in the open air by the seaside, and in fact at any time and place where he could reach the ear and heart of the people with the message of eternal life.

On his arrival in the Islands, he procured an unused loft, formerly a carpenter's shop, which he utilised as a chapel. He then made a systematic visitation of the district, modestly telling the people 'that a man is going to preach, will you come and hear him?' The response was general, and this first Methodist sanctuary was packed with an eager audience. This first sermon was the real beginning of a glorious evangelical work. The Lord was continually with him, made his way prosperous, and gave him great and good success. We shall best learn the success he achieved by reading a few extracts from his journal:

'Nov. 23, 1824.—I went to Dunrossness for a week where I preached *two and three times every day, besides meeting the Society Classes.** In walking back, I had to face a strong north wind and rain, which was the means of completely laying me aside. I was obliged to take to my bed, where I remained for nearly a month. For three days I was, to all appearance, very near death and little hope was entertained of my recovery. I was attended by Dr. Edmonston, who is very skilful in his profession and paid me every attention. He says my disorder was occasioned by a too great exertion, that nature was quite exhausted, and that I was like an old worn-out man. But through the good hand of my God upon me, my strength is returning; I have walked out twice this week, and preached in the house last Sabbath, being too weak to get to the chapel. The classes all came to my house, and we have had some refreshing seasons. On the next Sabbath I hope to 'tread the courts of the Lord.' . . . . 'In Dunrossness we have a society consisting of above a hundred members and have no place of meeting but a cottage, the dimensions of which are twenty feet by eleven. . . . . The Sandwick Chapel is nearly finished and I expect will be ready

* The italics are ours.

for opening in about three weeks' time. . . . The cause of God is prospering in Lerwick; it is going on from the least to the greatest. About a month ago I formed a Sunday School, where we have about sixty children, and their numbers increase every week. We have, therefore, plenty of work for the new converts.'

Along with the growth of these new societies there was created a need of local preachers. The need was great and Mr. Dunn, exerting the energy so typical of his whole character, at once commenced the work of training the natives to perform ministerial pulpit duties. He had great aptitude for this work, and this aptitude and diligence distinguished him, in a remarkable manner, throughout his entire ministry. The plan he adopted in these lonely Isles, during this great revival, is worthy of consideration. Class-leaders were trained to conduct prayer-meetings, to read in public, and in the lack of local preachers, they read a sermon of Mr. Wesley's on Sunday evenings to the congregations assembled.

The Rev. John Lewis, his colleague, writing at this time to the President of the Conference, says :—

'During the illness of Mr. Dunn, great anxiety was manifested on his account among all our societies; hundreds of pious souls were continually praying for his life.'

Mr. Dunn writes, Jan. 2nd, 1825 :—'My strength is increasing very fast, indeed I am quite recovered, with the exception of the soles of my feet, which are very tender. My lungs were never affected, so that I can preach with as much ease as ever I could. To God be all the praise! The Sandwick Chapel is now finished, and I hope to be able to open it on the next Sabbath. Blessed be God! He is still prospering the word of His grace. The cloud continues to spread along the sky. Between thirty and forty persons have been converted within the last month. The older members stand fast beyond all my expectations. I believe not one in fifty of those converted twelve months ago has backslidden. This is certainly very remarkable, as they have not had those helps which many other societies have enjoyed. In the classes and love-feasts they speak well, and I have every reason to believe that their conduct agrees with their profession.'

The following is a letter sent by him to Dr. Adam Clarke

containing further extracts from his journal about the conduct of his important work :—

'LERWICK, Feb. 16th, 1825.

'My dear Dr.—I did not undertake the journey West, which I was intending the last time I wrote. After I had put on my great coat and boots, and was just going to set off, Messrs. Lewis and Wears almost insisted on my remaining in town a little longer, until I had acquired more strength. I have since, however, visited the parishes of Nesting, Lunnasting, Delting and Northmavin, in two of which places I had never preached before. The weather has been such as the aged say they never recollect; and I am certain it has not been so severe for the three winters that I have been in Shetland, so that I am thankful I got through so well. The prospects in every place are cheering; and the preaching services are well attended. I formed two new societies, and admitted nearly thirty to the classes, who had never met before. I believe in a very short time the number in each place will be two or three times that amount. The valley of dry bones is already beginning to heave; and if we can only obtain suitable men to prophesy, I have no doubt we shall soon see a great army raised up, the living, the living to praise God. An extract from my journal will give you the best idea of our proceedings and prospects in these places.

'Jan. 22nd, 1825. I left Lerwick this morning in an open boat with six men, and after rowing thirty-five miles in a northern course, we arrived, about seven at night, very cold and hungry, at Northroe, a part of the mainland I had not visited before. Mr. Gardner kindly received me, and offered ground if we would build a chapel in Yell. I feel for that large island, and am sorry my time will not permit me to visit it.

Jan. 23rd. At ten this morning, and two in the afternoon, as no house could contain the people, I was obliged to preach on the beach. Many appeared to feel the word; two new members were joined to the class. I walked to Sandroe, and preached at six in a large cottage, which was crowded with attentive hearers, and met the class; two persons were there who had not been before.

Jan. 24th. I was prevented this morning from going to Uyea by the storm, and preached in the house, but never with such

pain before; the effect probably of preaching yesterday in the open air. I baptized a child, met the class, and joined two new members. In the evening I attempted to preach again, as a large congregation was assembled, and met the class, when another new member was present.

Jan. 25th. I felt liberty in preaching this morning from 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, 8, and two others attended the class. In the evening I preached in a cellar on the beach to a large company, and met the class, and added another to it.

Jan. 26th. After preaching this morning, I met the class, at which were two new members, and I left Northroe. This district is in Northmain; it contains, within a compass of three or four miles, about 700 inhabitants, who are distant from the parish-kirk from eight to twelve miles. As they have to pass over very dreary hills, where there is not the least appearance of a road, very few are able to attend, and those who do, a respectable gentleman informed me, are frequently injured in their health. There are few places where a small chapel is more needed. I left exactly fifty persons in society, who are all living within two miles of each other. In walking to Lochend, I had to face a strong wind and heavy rain, but was able to preach at six. I attempted to form a class and four remained for that purpose.

Jan. 27th. We have had such a storm all the day as I have never witnessed; we all feel thankful that the house is still standing. I have preached thrice in Mr. Lawrenceson's kitchen, and met the class.

Jan. 28th. After preaching this morning, and meeting a few members, I took boat for Ollaberry, and met with a very hearty reception from Arthur Cheyne, Esq., and preached at seven o'clock.

Jan. 29th. I preached at ten, and told those who wished for more advice about their souls, that I would meet them in class, and two remained. I preached again at night.

Jan. 30th. I preached to about 200 very attentive persons in a large booth, and met the class, which contained two new members. At four, I preached again to nearly the same number; and two more remained to meet in class.

Jan. 31st. At ten I preached for the last time in Ollaberry, and seven new members were added to the class. May they be

faithful! I took boat to Bray in Delting, and preached to a good number in the school-house.

Feb. 1st. I preached at nine, and then examined some of the scholars. I walked through the snow to the venerable old mansion of Busta, the seat of Arthur Gifford, Esq., and was politely received by that very respectable gentleman, with whom I spent a very pleasant evening. I preached at six. He generously gave me half an acre of ground in Northroe, a most eligible situation for a chapel, and a dwelling-house if required. He did it in such a noble manner as I shall not soon forget. May my God remember him for good!

Feb. 2nd. I left Busta this morning, crossed the Voe to Wethersta, walked two miles to West Scour, and took a boat five miles to Lunna; but such a voyage I never had: the wind blowing, the snow descending, and the waves dashing over the side of our little skiff, rendered our situation dangerous, and the cold was almost intolerable. When I landed, I was completely exhausted and wet to the skin, but knew not where to go. I found out a cottage, immediately took off my clothes, lay down on a straw bed, and slept soundly until nearly seven, when I arose and preached. I told the people I would meet privately those who were concerned for their soul's salvation: seven remained.

Feb. 3rd. Such a storm of wind and snow I never witnessed; and as the people could not venture on the outside of their doors, I preached to the family.

Feb. 4th. I preached to a good number in the morning, took boat to Vidling and preached. I walked to Skelberry, and preached again at night.

Feb. 5th. I preached in Skelberry, and walked three miles through deep snow to Catfirth, and preached at seven.

Feb. 6th. I preached twice in Catfirth to large congregations, and met the class; two new members were present. In the evening I took boat to Loxfirth, and was warmly received by James Hay, Esq., a very friendly and intelligent gentleman; he was often in company with Mr. Wesley as long ago as the year 1768. I preached at six, and the next day travelled through the snow to Lerwick, seldom better pleased with a journey. I think, upon the whole, that Methodism was never in such a flourishing state in Shetland, nor our prospects more cheering. I hope our kind

friends in England will still send us help, that we may be able to maintain the ground we have, and to go on to possess what yet remains. I am satisfied that there are but few places of the same size, in our Missionary field, of greater importance than this. I heard from Mr. Lewis yesterday; a good work is going on. The dwelling-house is just finished: it is a most excellent building; but as it is not yet sufficiently dry, I have taken our present lodging for another quarter.

Yours very affectionately,

SAMUEL DUNN.'

The following letter to the same divine speaks eloquently of his mission in the Orkneys:—

'April 18th, 1825. After labouring nearly three years in the Shetland Isles, and I trust not without some success—in compliance with the direction of the last Conference, I took my departure for the Orkneys this afternoon in a small sloop.

April 20th. About noon we made land; and as none on board were well acquainted with the Islands, we were glad to run into a large bay, which we found to be the Isle of Sandy, and above thirty miles north of Kirkwall. With one man I ventured on shore in our little boat, entered the first cottage, prayed with the family, bought a dozen eggs, and came off again to the vessel, thankful that we were in a place of safety.

April 21st. As the wind prevented us from getting out of the bay, I preached on board at twelve o'clock, and in the evening on shore, in a large barn,—which I obtained from the Rev. Mr. Trail,—to about sixty attentive hearers. He kindly offered me a bed, but I was obliged to return to the vessel. Sandy is twelve miles long, and contains 1800 inhabitants.

April 22nd. I was to have preached in the barn this morning at seven; but about five our anchor broke, and had we not been very active in getting under way, and putting off to sea, we must have gone ashore, and probably have been wrecked. The wind increased and the sea rose. About noon our boat was carried from the stern, and we saw it no more. However, by the kind care of Him 'whom winds and waves obey,' we entered Kirkwall Pier before night; but had again to sleep on board.

April 23rd. I met with a suitable little house, which I have

taken for one quarter, the rent is £2 10s.; but if I keep it the year, £8.

April 25th. As I was not able to obtain a place in which to preach, I stood before our door this evening, and addressed about sixty hearers on the 'Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ.'

April 26th. I preached in our kitchen.

April 27th. At one p.m., about sixty children, to whom I spoke last evening, came for tracts, which may the Lord accompany with His blessing! I then went to Stromness, the second town in the Islands, and situated fourteen miles west of Kirkwall. I knew not a person in the place, nor had I an introduction to any one. I prayed earnestly to God for direction, and about eight o'clock obtained a large loft, sent round the bell-man and preached with freedom to 200 attentive hearers.

May 1st. This morning, at half-past nine o'clock, I preached in a loft. Then went to the Cathedral, where divine service is performed twice every Lord's day. When the time in which it was erected, the place where it stands, and the people by whom it was raised, are all taken into account, it certainly must be considered an astonishing building. It is said to have been founded by Ronald, Count of Orkney, about the year of our Lord 1138, in honour of his uncle, St. Magnus, to whom it was dedicated. It stretches in a line from east to west, 236 feet: its breadth 56 feet; the arms of the cross are 30 feet long, and 33 feet broad; the height of the main roof is 71 feet. It is supported by twenty-eight pillars, 15 feet in circumference, besides four larger ones which support the spire. Only one end of it is set apart for worship, and this was not half filled. In the evening, as the loft could not contain one-third of the people, I was obliged to stand in the street, and felt some liberty, though the weather was unfavourable, in directing their attention to the 'precious seed,' the 'weeping sower,' and the 'joyful reaper.' During the week, I preached in the loft three times, and gave tracts to the children every other day.

May 8th. In the morning I preached in the loft; and in the evening, preached on the quay to about 500 hearers. I felt freedom in sowing the seed, may God give the increase!

May 11th. After having waited long for an opportunity to visit some of the other islands, I this morning met with a boat

from South Ronaldsa, where I arrived about five in the afternoon, after a very unpleasant passage. I preached at seven in a large room, kindly lent by Mr. Banks.

May 12th. In the morning I preached in Hope; in the afternoon in Mr. Durran's parlour, Widewell; and in the evening at Mrs. Cromirty's, a mile further south.

May 13th. In the morning I preached in Sandwick; and, in the afternoon and evening, in Mr. Reiny's convenient schoolroom, in the south part of the island, to very good congregations.

May 14th. I preached this morning at five o'clock, and had even more hearers than I had last evening; in the afternoon, in Sandwick; and in the evening, in Mr. Gray's parlour, Hoxey.

May 15th. I preached this morning in a field, to about 300 nearers; then went to the church on the east side of the island; and, after the service, nearly all the congregation remained on the outside of the door, while I directed them to the balm of Gilead. I then returned to Hope, and preached at six to, I think, 500 hearers.

May 16th. I preached at ten, in a yard, to about 300 very serious hearers; several of whom, after the sermon, came to me, and, with tears in their eyes, earnestly besought me soon to pay them another visit. I then left South Ronaldsa, where I met with much kindness, and was highly pleased with the largeness and attention of the congregations, as it was about the middle of the labouring season. The island is seven miles long and contains 2,000 inhabitants. Three other islands belong to the same ministry. I then took boat for Burra, an island three miles long, with about 300 inhabitants: a kirk was in it formerly but has long since gone to decay. I preached at five in a cornyard, then crossed a sound two miles wide, where the current was very strong, and walked eight miles alone to Kirkwall, thankful to God for strength, and much gratified with my journey.

Before I entered on the work in Orkney, it appeared very formidable; and since my arrival I have not been without my trials. I had no introduction to anyone. Methodism was here unknown. A person, a few years ago, who called himself a Methodist, preached in the islands for some time, until it was clearly proved that he was an impostor. He gave an occasion to

the enemies of God to blaspheme. I need not tell *you* what it is to be a stranger in a strange land, and the difficulties a preacher meets with in going into the highways and hedges.

Were it not for the special help of God, and the encouragement and assistance which I have received from my dear wife, who has in general been my precentor, I should have sunk under them. But, from what I have already seen and heard, I will take courage and go forward. The congregations, especially in the country, notwithstanding it is about the middle of the seed time, have been large; and I have, blessed be God, often felt much enlargement of soul in preaching the glad tidings of great joy.'

In reference to this gracious work of God under the labours of the Rev. Samuel Dunn in the Shetland Isles, Dr. Adam Clarke remarks: 'Who but those who have given their *lives* to the Lord will go through all the dangers and miseries of these travels in order to reach and feed those lost sheep?'

Writing at another date, he says:—

'O Sammy! how highly has God favoured you, to employ you in this work! How glad I should be to be your companion! *When I could,* I was a missionary; and many hardships have I suffered, and I feel the same spirit still. Chasms, and bogs, and voes, and men, and devils would be nothing to me. I have met *all such* in the name of Jesus, and have suffered, and have conquered.'

And in another letter:—

'Were God to restore me to youth again, I would glory to be your companion; to go through your thick and thin,—to lie on the ground, herd with the oxen, or lie down on a bottle of straw, as I have been obliged to do in former times. I do envy you. Where duty is concerned, winds, waves, and hyperborean regions are nothing to me. I can eat even the meanest things. I can dine heartily on a few potatoes and some salt, or half a pint of milk. I can wear a sack if necessary; for fine clothing I never affected. The S. P. are all "gentlemen." I thank God I bore the yoke in my youth. You do not take too much upon you. If God spare life, I will stand by you: and He will, should He be pleased to take me.'

And in another letter:—

'My dear Sammy,—When I had but one sovereign in the

world for Shetland, I prayed, called earnestly upon God and sat down and wept—and wept till I could scarcely see to read or write. Well, I once more thought I must lay the whole before our best earthly friend. With a full heart, I stated the matter in a letter to Mr. Scott, which letter was watered with fast-falling tears. He wrote me word, that he and Mrs. S. would be up in a fortnight and see me. They came; and I set off in very bad health to London to meet them; and oh, what a meeting! Their hearts were nearly as full as mine. Says Mr. S., "Come, let me have a cheque; I will give orders on my bank for £100." Says Mrs. S., "And I will, out of my private purse, give five pounds." "And I am desired," says Mr. S., "by my sister-in-law, Miss Grainger, to give five pounds; and lest any chapel begun should be impeded, here is ten pounds more; and thus I will give the cheque for £120. And this is not all that I will do: I tell you again, I will give ten pounds to every chapel or house begun under your direction in Shetland." O my Sammy! you can hardly tell how much I rejoiced. I thanked God; I thanked them, and could have kissed the ground on which they trod. I said in my heart, "O my poor Shetlanders, whom I have never seen, and now never shall see; but God has laid you upon my heart! God has not forgotten you." I sent my cheque to the bankers, got the cash, £120, and immediately wrote to you, and told you what God had done, to take courage and go forward. Mr. Scott has written to me two or three days ago, stating that he is very poorly, and wishes to make a trust deed in behalf of the Shetlands, and to do this immediately, and wishes me to give him the names with which I wish it to be filled. Old as I am, I must be one, Mr. Butterworth will be another, and you shall be the third.

'Yours, my dear Sammy, affectionately,

ADAM CLARKE.'

For Samuel Dunn the doctor had a strong and undying affection, and referring to that love, Mr. Dunn, writing in later years, says:—

'At an early period I had the satisfaction of becoming personally acquainted with him (Dr. A. Clarke) and of enjoying his friendship. His dignified simplicity and beautiful transparency of character could not but excite admiration and kindle love.

He took me to his bosom, opened to me his heart, freely gave me his opinion on many interesting and delicate subjects, and displayed such kindness and confidence, notwithstanding the disparity of years, as at times surprised me. . . . When I was a young man, I asked him if he would advise me to apply myself to the study of geology and mineralogy, when he promptly replied, "Yes; a Methodist preacher should know everything."'

The result of Mr. Dunn's labours to the Methodist Church on these islands was *six hundred precious souls* brought into membership, and the erection of numerous places of worship. His name was revered by the thousands among whom he laboured.

As a further sample of the Rev. Samuel Dunn's mode of working and success in soul saving, we give the following descriptive letter referring to a later period of his ministry, and published in the *Wesleyan Magazine* in 1839.

The editor, the late venerable Rev. Thomas Jackson, wrote regarding his work: "We gladly insert the following letter. It will be read with deep interest and with great thankfulness and joy. We trust it will be the means of encouraging both effort and expectation in other parts of the Connexion.'

'CAMBORNE, *March 16th*, 1839.

'Last evening we terminated our quarterly visitation in this Circuit, and found that we have an increase on the number given in at the last Conference, of *three hundred members;* and that we have given notes of admittance, this quarter, to *one thousand one hundred and twenty persons,* the greater portion of whom, we have reason to believe, have now their names written in the Book of Life. A revival of equal extent and depth I have never witnessed. Shortly after the Conference the congregations began to increase, until our large chapel was filled to overflowing. We also occasionally met with persons who appeared thankful for an invitation to the class-meeting, feeling desirous of being instructed in the ways of God more perfectly. But since the commencement of this year, there has been a greater "flow" into the Church of Christ, more resembling, however, the steady river than the mountain torrent. As near as I have been able to ascertain, for the last eleven weeks, we have had about *one hundred* conversions weekly; and the last week has been

The italics are ours.

equal to any of the former. Men two hundred fathoms under the surface of the earth have been found on their knees, calling on the God of heaven to bring them up out of the horrible pit and miry clay of sin; and many Rachels, in their private dwellings, have had their mourning turned into joy. There have not been many children, as yet, brought under a serious concern for their souls; three-fourths of those who have joined us are, I judge, from twenty to forty years of age, while a few still more advanced have been converted, and become as little children. From the commencement of the work no means of an extraordinary kind have been employed. Perhaps I should remark that we preached a few sermons on the nature of a revival; the necessity of revivals; the hindrance of revivals; the means to be used for revivals. We strongly urged our people to attend the prayer-meetings, and reminded them that, if they would unite in fervent, believing supplication, God would assuredly pour out His Spirit, and revive His work. They answered to the call, and at each meeting we had generally three or four hundred present. My colleagues and myself made a general canvass of the town, calling from house to house, and testifying to the people the necessity of repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. We have met about seventy children every Saturday afternoon, and have a large public class of young women, and another of young men; but in order to meet them have been obliged to hold three meetings on the same evening. The Lord's Supper has been administered every six weeks, instead of once a quarter, and the new converts have been, on two occasions, privately instructed in the nature, the obligation, and the advantages of this holy sacrament. They have been furnished with copies of the rules of the Society, and exhorted by a variety of motives to be consistent Methodists.

We have grappled with the difficulty of dividing large classes, and have been particularly careful in appointing new leaders, examining them, first privately and then before a leaders' meeting, as to their personal piety, belief of our doctrines, and cordial attachment to our discipline. In conducting the public services, we have discountenanced noise and confusion, have not allowed more than one person at a time to engage in prayer, and hence have been always able to keep the reins in our own hands; and

scarcely anything bordering upon levity or extravagance has been witnessed from the beginning. We have now in this little town, with a population of three thousand souls, above *one thousand* meeting in class; and within two miles of my house, *two thousand five hundred* in Church fellowship with us. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. But we rejoice with trembling. Our spirits daily quail under the tremendous responsibility. O the wisdom and diligence it will require to keep those who have entered our ranks, and to train up "the sacramental host of God's elect!" The eyes of heaven, earth and hell will be upon us. Still our sufficiency is of God. Pray for us. My bodily strength has been often exhausted. I have not had one vacant night for the quarter, but dear Dr. Clarke used to say "We are immortal till our work is done."—I am, yours affectionately, SAMUEL DUNN.'

It is almost imperative that a little personal description of this wonderful zealous worker should be given.

Mr. Dunn was a man of medium height and possessed of a fine, erect bearing. His temperament was equable, his manner kind and affable, and he was, moreover, gifted with excellent conversational powers. He exhibited on all occasions a great firmness of character, and in the face of desperate opposition maintained his indomitable courage. Endowed with more than ordinary brain capacity, he sedulously cultivated the talent. His sermons were substantial, sound and practical, and always gave evidence of careful preparation. He used rich and elegant diction and his manner of address was fervent and impressive. He was often inspiriting and vehement in his delivery, and always distinct in his utterance. Devout in his manner, he was faithfully conscientious, inflexible in his argument—a real, honest workman 'rightly dividing the word of truth.' A preacher of the old Methodist school, he united doctrinal and practical teaching, and blended them imperceptibly, but harmoniously. Firmly grounded in Christian doctrine, his knowledge and intimacy with the Word of God and Christian experience were very extensive—almost unrivalled.

From the commencement to the close of his lengthened, honourable ministry, he earned and sustained the character of

The italics are ours.

an able, effective preacher, and a zealous, faithful pastor.

He was especially unsurpassable for his affection and attention to the religious education of the young. In every circuit he exhibited a rare and untiring diligence in the organization and conduct of Catechumen Classes. He preached many special sermons to children and young people, and made them peculiarly interesting and fascinating, and he prepared for their guidance a catechism which had a large and extensive sale.

For conspicuous energy, plodding and unflagging industry, in all seasons, at all times, and under the most discouraging and disadvantageous circumstances, early and late, he has only been surpassed, if at all, by John Wesley and Dr. Adam Clarke.

He laboured successively and successfully in some of the largest and most influential circuits of the Wesleyan Connexion, including: Newcastle-on-Tyne, Rochdale, Manchester, Sheffield, Tadcaster, Edinburgh, Camborne, Dudley, Halifax, Newcastle-on-Tyne (second time) and Nottingham. He was appointed by Conference secretary to several districts. In every circuit God abundantly blessed his labours, hundreds of precious souls were saved, and he could say, 'Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place.'

His ministry in these circuits covered a period of thirty years and throughout the whole time he worked with uniform zeal. That he stood high in the estimation of his brethren as a disciplinarian and possessing good administrative ability may be gathered from the fact that during the Centenary Year of Methodism, the late venerable Rev. Thomas Jackson and Dr. Jabez Bunting, when visiting Truro, took Samuel Dunn aside and, addressing him with much seriousness, said: 'We shall look to YOU for the working of Methodism in Cornwall.'

About this time Mr. Dunn wrote in defence of 'Revivals of Religion,' referring particularly to the work in Cornwall, from which we give the following extract:—'During the last thirty years, Cornwall perhaps has been more favoured with revivals of religion than any other part of the kingdom. It has however, been frequently remarked "that this has been of no real advantage, that after such large accessions the *decrease* has been nearly equal to the increase." The following state-

ments, however, of members in the Cornish District will show that this is not correct:—

In 1810 the number was 6,601.
In 1840 „ „ 22,871.

Or take the three circuits in which there have been the most extensive revivals during that period:—

First—REDRUTH, including Camborne and Tucking Mill—
In 1810 the number was 1,741.
In 1840 „ „ 5,720.

Second—TRURO, including St. Agnes and Gwennap—
In 1810 the number was 1,403.
In 1840 „ „ 4,012.

Third—PENZANCE, including St. Ives and St. Just—
In 1810 the number was 1,384.
In 1840 „ „ 5,200.

Total number of members in these circuits—
In 1810 the number was 4,528.
In 1840 „ „ 14,932.

In these three Circuits there were in 1810 only ten travelling preachers; there are now (1840), on the same ground, twenty-one.

From the above you will perceive that we have no cause to fear revivals, but earnestly to pray that they may increase yet more and more, till the millions of the human family be gathered into the fold of Christ. I may add that, as far as my observation has extended, a large proportion of the persons brought into the Society during revivals have been more soundly converted to God than of those who have entered in the ordinary way.

* * * * * *

In conclusion let me remark, that if revivals of religion be of God, and so beneficial to the Church, all legitimate means should be used for their promotion. Every obstacle connected with the ministry, the members, and the discipline of the Church, should be removed; and thus, according to the prophet, should we 'Prepare the way of the Lord, and make straight in the desert a highway for our God,' that 'The glory of the Lord may be revealed, and all flesh see it together.' And as we have seen that intercessory prayer is so availing, we should 'give the Lord no

rest until He establish Jerusalem, and make a praise in the whole earth;' nor should we refuse co-operation in a revival because it may not come in the way just suited to our taste and educational prejudices. God is a Sovereign, is not to be dictated to by man. His operations are diversified in grace, as well as in nature, and to His pleasure we should implicitly bow. If the water of life be given, 'the city of God' should be 'glad,' whatever may be the channel of its communication, and, whether as 'a rushing mighty wind' or as 'a small, still voice,' the Holy Spirit may accomplish His saving design, the children of Zion should 'rejoice in their King.' No views of Church order should be allowed to interfere with a manifest work of God. In the early part of Mr. Wesley's life, his views of Church order were such that he tells us he should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin, if it had not been done in a Church, and had he, as a bigoted Churchman, tenaciously adhered to these views, either must the world have suffered incalculable loss, or some other man must have taken Wesley's crown. It would be a great advantage to spiritual religion if all Wesleyans, like their honoured founder, would allow God to work in His own way in the regeneration of our fallen world.

In conducting the religious services of a revival, much discretion is required, and we hesitate not to say, that those ministers who commit them to the direction of incompetent persons incur a tremendous responsibility. By such a step real confusion frequently ensues, good is evil spoken of, the Holy Spirit is grieved, and the visitation is like that of 'a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night.' Never is the wisdom from above more needed than in the management of revivals, and should therefore be diligently sought by earnest prayer, that neither the animal feeling, nor the favourite theories of men, may be allowed to obstruct or mar the work of God.'

Mr. Dunn was himself a revivalist of a high order, though he never appropriated such a title, nor would he have done so had he been honoured with tenfold the success in soul-winning. In this greatest of all labour the promise of our Divine Lord was verified in him, 'Your fruit shall remain.'

Not only as a revivalist and preacher was he distinguished, but also as a theologian and voluminous author. His reading

was extensive. His love for Methodism unabating. He published at various times at least a dozen different pamphlets in defence of Methodism to repel the attacks of infidels, Socinians, Papists, High Episcopalians and others, in addition to numerous separate sermons, pamphlets, and memoirs. He also published five octavo volumes of 'Systematic Theology' which bear the imprint of thoughtful study and careful argument. The first was, 'Christian Theology, by Dr. Adam Clarke, selected from his published writings and systematically arranged, with a life of the author, also similar volumes with lives of the separate theologians, John Calvin, John Howe, John Goodwin, John Fletcher,' also 'Christian Theology for every day in the year.' The others were 'The Gospels Harmonised, with numerous notes, explanatory, experimental and practical,' 'Lectures on Popery,' 'Memoirs of the seventy Divines whose discourses form the morning exercises at Cripplegate, St. Giles-in-the-Field and in Southwark—with eighty outlines of sermons,' 'A Dictionary of the Gospels with lessons for Bible and Catechumen Classes,' and 'Lessons on the Gospels.'

These, with others, made altogether twenty octavo volumes. Each of them had a large sale, many passing through several editions. They were highly reviewed, and recommended by the religious magazines of the day.

Mr. Dunn, however, did not covet literary work; he was not ambitious, but merely wrote to establish Christian doctrine.

The Rev. Dr. Adam Clarke, not long before his decease, offered the copyright of his incomparable Commentary to Mr. Dunn, but Mr. Dunn says:—

'I was not prepared to take the responsibility of its publication.'

Writing again the Doctor says: 'I have laid the foundation of a Biblical Dictionary.' . . . 'I may possibly write some Institutes' . . . 'If you were stationed in the south and would assist me, I could do many things; but my eyes will not now bear any intense application.' . . . 'O that my strength were as in days that are past! While writing it seems as if whispered to me, "Your time is at hand. Samuel Dunn shall be your proxy in My work."'

In referring to another period of Mr. Dunn's life, that of his

expulsion from the Wesleyan Conference and what is now known as the 'Reform Agitation,' we can only look back with sincere regret on the Conference of 1849 as a black page in the history of Methodism.

That Conference, and particularly its chief and influential members, adopted methods which caused to be expelled three of the most gifted and useful ministers, against whom there existed not the slightest charge as to their moral and ministerial character. Without any trial, much less an impartial trial, they were expelled, merely on suspicion of being in secret sympathy with the sentiments and opinions of the famous 'Fly-sheets.'

It is not desirable to enter into details respecting the arguments contained in the anonymous pamphlet advertised in the Wesleyan *Methodist Magazine*, 'Wesleyan Matters,' on the one hand, and the 'Fly-sheets' on the other—both were a great discredit to Christianity.

The reprehensible attitude of the Conference culminated in the wanton expulsion of three of its leading lights, and revealed a state of ministerial spiritual declension and degeneracy unparalleled in the annals of Methodism. The power of absolute ministerialism is now happily much diminished, and the proportionate infusion of lay members provides a certain and sure safeguard against a repetition of the design and intrigue practised in 1849.

The disastrous sequences of the expulsion are best seen in the following extract from the work of a well-known Methodist historian:—'The effects of the expulsion were very extensive, leading to the loss of nearly 100,000 members, and as many pounds.' This secession also included hundreds of local preachers, officials, Sunday-school teachers and the loss of numerous chapels and Sunday-schools.

It is only too evident that the blunder which the Conference made was deeply regretted when too late to overtake the error, and a prominent Wesleyan minister, Dr. Dixon, writing to Mr. Dunn, Feb. 18th, 1869, says:—

'I have often made the remark, which I first made to Dr Bunting: "That to inflict the heaviest penalty either for an unproven offence, or contumacy, as the case might be, was not wise," referring to these "disciplinary acts of 1849," to which the Doctor replied:—'"You will know it is easy to be wise after events.

Had we to deal with the subject again, perhaps we should not go so far." Such are the remarks of the sagacious Dr. Bunting.

A new branch of Methodism was thus forced into existence, but Mr. Dunn did not unite with the new body. His line of conduct accorded with the following advice given him by the late Rev. and Venerable James Dixon, D.D., ex-President of the Wesleyan Conference :—'Not to join any sect, but hold yourself at liberty to preach wherever Providence makes an opening. You cannot do better than go to your own county, dwell among your own people, who esteem and love you, and preach for all who may invite you.'

Mr. Dunn ultimately settled in his native county at Camborne, as pastor of the 'Free Church,' where he laboured with great success for nine years. Here he experienced a difficulty which most preachers have in finding a hymn always suitable to the subject of his discourse. This led him to compose one himself every week based on the text of his morning sermon. Very soon the hymns he had composed began to multiply, and most of those sung in his church were finally published in a neat volume of 525 hymns, entitled—'Hymns for Pastor and People.'

In nearly all of them the leading thoughts of his sermons may be traced from the text heading the hymn. They are not so much hymns on subjects, as on texts. Mr. Dunn says in his preface: 'My object has been to exhibit the great truths of God's Word correctly, distinctly, and forcibly.'

The following are selections from the volume before us:—

THE SPIRIT POURED.

Joel ii. 28.

COME, Thou soul-refreshing Spirit,
Water now the precious seed,
Bought for us by Jesu's merit,
And we shall be blessed indeed.
Come and quicken, come and nourish,
Heal the sick and raise the dead;
Cause our barren souls to flourish,
Let the hungry ones be fed.

Come, Thou soul-transforming Spirit,
Faith, and hope, and joy impart
Let all flesh Thy grace inherit,
Fill with love each longing heart.

Father, now Thy Spirit pour,
  Turn the desert to a field;
Send the fertilizing shower,
  Richest fruits we then shall yield.

A TIME TO PLANT.

Ecclesiastes iii. 2.

WHAT ought we to implant?
  In every youthful heart,
That God His grace may grant,
  To quench each fiery dart,
The principles of truth and love,
That just and upright they may prove

How should we early plant?
  With wisdom and with care;
Avoiding foolish cant,
  Yet watching unto prayer:
Firmness with tenderness display,
And persevere from day to day.

When should we plant the truth,
  That it may stately grow?
In early days of youth
  When they will sooner bow:
Grace will their youthful ardour suit,
Ere evil habits can take root.

Why plant in early days?
  That they may love their God;
And live unto His praise,
  Spreading His fame abroad:
A comfort unto us be found,
And bearing fruit to all around.

At the conclusion of his ministry in the Free Church of Camborne, he writes:—

'June 16, 1865.—I take my final departure from Camborne on Monday, for a time in the United States. . . . . My people have united with the 'Methodist New Connexion.' He then left for America, where he visited the Methodist Churches in the Dominion of Canada and the United States, and was everywhere received with open arms and granted free access to the pulpits of all their churches.

Speaking of the event of his visit to the States, he says:—

'When I arrived in New York, a perfect stranger, without a letter to any one, I made my way to the book-room of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and there met with the distinguished ministers, the acute Dr. Curry, the sagacious Dr. Porter, and the eloquent and devoted Bishop Simpson. I told them that I had just arrived from England, was a Methodist of the third generation, had known their first Bishop, Thomas Coke, who had been entertained at my father's house; that I had been familiar with Samuel Drew, the celebrated metaphysician; and, I might say, had been taken to the bosom of Adam Clarke; that for thirty years I had laboured with head and heart, pen and purse, in connection with the Wesleyan Conference; that in 1849, without any trial or evidence that I had violated any law, human or divine, I was expelled; and that my name was Samuel Dunn. Upon this the good Bishop, with great heartiness, seized my hand, saying 'Samuel Dunn! why I have known you from a child. You are welcome to America. Our churches will be open to you, and I shall have pleasure if you will this afternoon accompany me to my home in Philadelphia.' I said 'I am not a representative of any Church, nor have I any wish to make any further reference to the acts of the old Conference.' The Bishop answered, 'You need not; I know all about them. I was editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* at the time, and read extensively on the subject. I have since attended the English Conference, talked with the leading members about those acts, and about you, have formed my opinion of them, and assure you that you will be cordially received as a reverend minister.'

Here he laboured with voice and pen, preaching the ever blessed Gospel of the Son of God. He wrote a series of articles on 'Anecdotes of Wesley, chiefly from the papers of Dr. Adam Clarke;' also 'Original Wesley Papers,' which appeared in the *New York Christian Advocate*. The articles have, from time to time, appeared in various religious newspapers in England, but their authorship remains unacknowledged. He says 'For three years, every Sabbath I proclaimed the Gospel of Christ, preached at seven of their Conferences, was admitted on my known character a member of the New York East Conference.' He continued a member and minister in connection with this Conference to the close of life.

Mr. Dunn took with him to the Methodist Episcopal Church a collection of various relics of the founders of Methodism, including original manuscripts of Wesley, John Fletcher, Carvosso, David Stoner and Adam Clarke; the original bust taken from life of John Wesley ten years before his death; two original manuscripts of Mrs. Susanna Wesley, beautiful specimens of penmanship and every way characteristic of the mother of the Wesleys; and a variety of other interesting and curious articles of special interest to the lovers of Methodism.

These numerous articles were deposited in the Lyceum of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

On Mr. Dunn returning to England, the following resolution was passed and forwarded to him:—

'At the New York Preachers' Meeting, May 11, 1868, the following preamble and resolution were unanimously adopted: Whereas the Rev. Samuel Dunn, of England, who has sojourned among us for the space of nearly three years, preaching with great constancy and ability the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God, taking a deep interest in all that concerns our beloved Methodism, and in various ways, by his presence and labours and offerings, promoting its prosperity, has now returned to his native land, there probably to spend the residue of his days: Therefore resolved by the Preachers' Meeting of New York that we express the pleasure we have experienced in his intercourse, and the profit we have received under the intelligent, Scriptural and able ministry of Mr. Dunn; that we will cherish a grateful memory of his devout life and of his assiduous labours, and we pray that everywhere, as among us, his services may be crowned with divine honour.'

Preaching was truly his loved employment—one to which God had specially gifted him and set him apart. He was no sooner in England than open doors were accorded him in the pulpits of his brother ministers. For a time he stayed with his long-tried and faithful friends, Mr. James Drummond and family, Bradford, Yorkshire, and subsequently made a journey into Cornwall and also along the south coast, everywhere preaching with acceptance and blessing. In some of his letters, speaking of the tour, he says:—

'Camborne, March 23, 1869.—I preached twice at Croydon

on Sunday, and yesterday travelled alone 300 miles to this town in 13 hours; but stood the journey well and after a good night's rest feel no ill effects. . . . I shall now have a little time to prepare for my five services, which commence on Friday morning. Things around here look very natural to me, but as yet I have not called on the friends. . . .'

'St. Just, Cornwall, June 1, 1869.—Here I am "on the narrow neck of land," in the neighbourhood of which I preached last Sabbath. The great Atlantic stretches before my view in all grandeur, but the weather is very cold for the season. I have now been ten weeks in the county, and have preached on every Sabbath—at Camborne, Mevagissey, St. Ives and St. Just, and have lectured four or five times on America, but all my services have been free. My old friends at Camborne wish me to become their pastor, but all around appears so lifeless and dull that I cannot make up my mind to it. I have preached for the New Connexion, Primitives, United and Bible folks, and shall likely remain in the county during the summer a servant of all the Churches, willing to take any services. My dear and faithful friend, Bromley, died on the 19th ult. He had many excellencies. I wrote to dear Dr. Dixon yesterday. . . .'

'June 24.—Next Sabbath I think of improving the death of honoured James Bromley, in the chapel here, which he opened nine years ago. On the following Sabbath preach anniversary sermons, on Monday I lecture on America, and on May 5th am expected to lecture on the Americans. . . .'

'St. Just, Aug. 26, 1869.— . . . Nearly six months have fled since I said adieu. . . . My health has been good, and I have not been idle. On every Sabbath I have unfurled the banner of the Cross and frequently on the week-day, and not without good results. . . .'

'St. Just, Dec. 1, 1869.—I have preached on every Sabbath since I left Bradford and frequently on week-days, and as all my services are gratuitous, I am not likely to be left idle for want of invitations. My health was never better, and it suits my mind to be in this very quiet spot within a few yards of the broad Atlantic. We have occasional storms, but it is not so cold here as with you. When you write in future call first on

my dear old friend, Dr. Dixon, that I may know how he is. I had a charming letter from him two months ago. . . . On Sabbath I am expected to preach missionary sermons for the New Connexion at St. Ives, and on Good Friday and Easter Sunday for our chapel here, and *then*, having given them, for the *third* time, five months' gratuitous service, I think I shall leave. . . . . I had thought of another visit to America. My New York East Conference opens April 10th, and the *general* four years' Conference May 1st, but it is rather formidable to take such a journey alone.'

'HELSTON.— . . . . I have got through some heavy work at several places in this county, having preached for no less than ten different parties—"the friend of all, the enemy of none." Last Tuesday the place was densely crowded, and the night was keen and boisterous.'

'SCILLY ISLES.— . . . . Yesterday I came from St. Ives to these isles of the Atlantic, twenty-five miles off Land's End. I have taken quiet lodgings, and am engaged for the Wesleyan pulpit twice on Sabbath.'

'ST. JUST.— . . . . The weather has been excessively trying. I have been graciously borne up, and have preached three times a week without a failure. My last text in 1870 was "Ebenezer," and my first in the New Year, "The goodness of God." And are we not under ten thousand obligations to *thank* HIM from whom all blessings flow.'

'CROYDON.—The five weeks I have been here, I have given some ten sermons to United Free Methodists and the Primitives. Two days ago the Wesleyan Superintendent invited me to preach in his chapel here, next Sabbath evening; and I have consented if all be well.

'PENZANCE.—I have had a cold for ten days, but preached yesterday for the Primitives. On Wednesday I expect to leave for St. Austell, forty miles east. Services there for the United Methodists on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. I remain a few days, when I return west twenty-five miles to St. Agnes, for a missionary sermon in the large Wesleyan Old Conference Chapel. I am quite undecided after that as to my course, whether to Mevagissey, or Plymouth, or Torquay, which my niece Rickett reached on Wednesday last. How I shall get through the

various services, time will show. From the enclosed bills you will see that I am not left to be idle. How much better it is to wear out than to rust out. The winter is past, and the time of the singing of birds is come; I think therefore of taking my departure from this town in a fortnight.'

'St. Just.—I left this place for Croydon. It has many attractions, and my beloved friends strongly urged my remaining there; but I could not satisfy myself to give up my preaching, and having evidence that I might be useful to the little Church here, I tore myself away from Croydon last Friday, and after a cold lonely journey of 350 miles, arrived at St. Just late on Saturday night, yet had strength to preach twice on the Sabbath, without inconvenience. I may remain, if spared, to the commencement of next year. My health is still very good.'

'St. Austell.—I have been here, only six miles from Mevagissey, my native place, since Christmas, and have had remarkably good health, which I have employed in preaching without much interruption for the different denominations—seven times within the last eight days.'

'I am still pretty fully engaged. Last Sabbath I preached to large congregations of the Bible Christians. Next Sabbath the Congregationalists expect two sermons from me. Then the Primitives. Yesterday an invitation from the Free Church, and am announced for the Bible Christians in Camborne a fortnight hence. The Wesleyan Conference there the following week. Whether I shall tarry awhile, I cannot *now* determine. My early friends have passed away, and I am left nearly alone.'

'I have nothing extraordinary to communicate, but for ordinary blessings we ought to be grateful. My health is still good, and opportunities of preaching the Word of Life are numerous, which I gladly embrace. Last Sabbath week I preached for the Wesleyans twice, at a large village six miles distant, that I had not visited for *sixty years*. The next night for the Bible Christians. Last Sabbath for the United Methodists, and again last evening for the Bible Christians.'

'St. Just.— . . . Our sympathising High Priest, Jesus Christ, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. I have lately thought much of the heavenly world, but oh, what "abundance of grace" must be necessary to adapt us to its

mansions, society, services and enjoyments. . . . I am announced for sermons on Good Friday and Easter Sunday, but how long I may remain here after that I cannot say. The friends will not hear of my leaving, but they have no claim, as *I have given them nearly two years' labour gratuitously.* Our New York East Conference sits next week. I have sent the brethren my annual epistle. I heard from dear Dr. Dixon last week, who keeps up wondrously. My health has been good through the winter, so that I have been able to attend to all my public duties.'

'PORTMELON, near Mevagissey, Cornwall, May 6th, 1873.—My dear Brother Drummond,—I purpose remaining here until, if spared, the beginning of June, and then to inform you how matters stand as to Shetland. Since I came to my native town I have preached for the Wesleyans, the United Methodists, and the Congregationalists, also in the village three miles distant, where I preached my *first* sermon *fifty-six years ago*, and established a Sunday-school, teaching forty boys and forty girls without any assistance from others. At the close of my sermon I said "I know not if any of those scholars are in the congregation," when a grey-headed man shouted, "I was one of them." Then a second man, and then a woman—the scene was affecting. I am also affording the Wesleyans some assistance in removing a heavy debt from their chapel, with which they have been long distressingly burdened.

'To yourself, Dear Sister D——, and all, in love,

'SAMUEL DUNN.'

Writing again to Mr. Drummond from Mevagissey a little later he said,—'The fugitive moment refuses to stay. While I have been waiting to see the way clear, and to have something decisive to say, hours, days, and weeks have fled. Nine days ago, my niece Rickett, and her daughter and niece, arrived from Torquay. We have apartments in the house which my dear father had built in 1790; and *I* occupy the room in which I was *born*, in February, 1798. My visitors are much pleased and improving in health. But what shall I say of *our* visit to Shetland? I really am perplexed, so let me know as early as convenient your present views and wishes Much as I should

like to visit the scenes of my early labours, I am aware of the inconveniences of travelling so many miles by land and water. Yet if *you* are decided for it, a trifle will not keep *me* back. Should, however, the door be closed, I would advise you and dear Sister D—— to come to my native town, and, be assured, nothing shall be wanting on my part to make you happy. To-morrow I am expected to preach for the Old Wesleyans and Bible Christians. On ascertaining the day on which the steamer leaves Leith, we might set out from Bradford to Shetland in three days, and remain two, or four, or six weeks, as most convenient. I regret that you are out of health. Do not undertake more work, physical or mental, than your strength will allow. Make haste slowly. Do a little at a time, that you may do much. The Lord grant you a peaceful spirit in a healthy body, and every blessing.'

It will thus be seen from his letters that he had arranged for a visit to the Shetlands, to preach among the scenes of his early missionary successes. He also contemplated a second visit to America, but his companion-elect was prevented from going through the death of a relative, so these journeys were abandoned.

It is necessary that some idea should be given of the interest he took in all that pertained to Methodism. In private conversation his soul was often stirred within him when he talked of the Wesleys, Clarke, Watson and other of the worthies who laboured 'to spread Scriptural holiness through the land.' He loved to dwell on the glories and historic records of revivals; and seemed familiar with the men, noble and true, who had passed to their reward. He never tired of relating anecdotes of those early preachers, bearing on Divine providence and soul-saving. His memory was tenacious and retentive to the last. When past fourscore years—without any effort of memory—on being asked, he could immediately tell who was President of the Wesleyan Conference during any given period for the past sixty years, and could also give particulars of their birth, ministerial life, and death. He could further ,with equal ease, accurately relate where he preached, and from what text, &c., on any Sabbath during the same period.

He rarely lost an opportunity of imparting information. Seldom did a young minister have the privilege of his society

but he was asked what text he preached from last, how he dealt with it, what were its divisions, and results. He would point out defects, if any, suggest improvements, open channels of thought, and give forth valuable instruction from his fund of theological knowledge. Wherever he found a young man open to instruction, whether one in the full ministry, or a local preacher, he generously offered his manuscript sermons for his use, always however with the caution—'Do not mention to *any* one that you have received sermons from me.' The subjoined paragraphs, extracted from letters written to a young preacher, fully illustrate the affectionate regard he entertained towards young ministers, and tells beautifully, in his own succinct language, of his deep interest in their mental improvement :—

'Let us all gird our loins and work while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work. Always keep in mind that the heavenly *reward* from the fountain of mercy will be regulated by a principle of justice, and hence will be in proportion to the *grace* you obtain and retain, and to what you *do* and suffer for your Lord . . . Read sound theology. Study prayerfully the Scriptures, and be very careful in the selection of texts. There are three things necessary to a good sermon.

'1st. The matter must be *important.*

'2nd. It must rise *out* of the *text.*

'3rd. It must be naturally *arranged.*

'No sermon is good that lacks any one of these. *They are essentials.* I enclose three of my MSS.—written above fifty years ago. Read them carefully until you understand them—then write a good outline, making what use you think necessary of mine. They will afford you good matter and in a clear sermonic form. However, make the trial, and if you succeed, I can send you others. Rather than totally fail you may *read* one to the congregation. Be calm, and do not make any apology if you attempt it.'

'I think you will be able easily to deliver the *two* you have, if you study and understand them, always carefully observing the several divisions and the *order* in which they stand; so that if at any time your memory fail, you can *pass on* to the next without serious injury to the sermon, and if you do not tell your hearers, they will not likely discover it. Master your subject

before you go into the pulpit, and there be calm. Do not aim at high things—*fine* sermons—but a clear, pointed, affectionate statement of important truths, keeping humble and in entire dependence on God, and then by His blessing you will be useful —whether you preach fifteen minutes or fifty. I have sent you some additional remarks on the Great Salvation, Heb. ii. 3, and three more sermons. *Study* them and do not overburden your memory.'

'Redeem your time; stir up your gifts; watch for opportunities of usefulness; devise plans; put forth your energies, physical, intellectual, religious, to lessen misery; strive to increase the sum of human happiness, to be a blessing to the world, the Church, your family, and to augment the revenue of glory to the great Lord of all. *Do, my dear young friend,* do something that will bear reflection in after life, and that will be felt in its beneficial influence when you shall have passed away to give your account of the deeds done in the body.'

It is impossible, in the limited space at disposal here, to give other examples of his interest in the young or to deal with other incidents in his exceptionally successful career. However, it is essential, to give completeness to this sketch, that something should be said of the closing years of the venerable minister.

His life deepened with mellowness as his years increased. Those who knew his private life loved him most. We never heard him indulge in an unkind remark, not even against the men who took part in the regrettable acts of the Conference of 1849. He always avoided the subject and would not be drawn into conversation on the point at issue. He possessed a deeply sympathetic nature, full of sincere solicitude for the afflictions and sorrows of others, and this sublime side of his character cannot, perhaps, be better shown than in quoting the annexed extracts from a private letter to an afflicted young lady, in which he refers eloquently to the bright hopefulness of the Christian's glorious prospects.

'St. Just, Cornwall,
'*March 4th*, 1870.

'My Dear Young Sister,—Deeply do I sympathise with you in your severe and protracted affliction, and gladly, were I able, would I minister to your cares and comfort, nor do you doubt

but that your dear parents would make any sacrifice, that your malady might be removed, and you restored to health. But it is not possible for them to love you with the considerateness, tenderness, and sympathy with which Jesus loves you. He cannot make a mistake, or do wrong, or be unkind. He has given Himself for you—is now thinking of you—interceding for you. Amid the splendour of heaven, is looking down, and amid its melody and harmony, hears your every sigh and prayer. You are under the care of this merciful and loving Saviour, and it is *because* He loves you, that He chastens you. He wants you to have a bright crown, and a seat near Him in glory; and such seats are reserved for those who come up out of *much tribulation*, and wash their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.

'If your continuance on earth will be for your good, it will be so. He who has all diseases under His control, and the keys of the invisible world in His custody will say: "This sickness shall not be unto death, but for the glory of God." *Believest thou this?* Do not of His goodness doubt. Have unbounded confidence in Him. You cannot please Him better than by coming to Him, as a little child to an indulgent parent, for all you want. Open your heart freely to Him. Lay hold of His cross. Appropriate to *yourself* the merits of His death. Welcome Him to every apartment of your soul.

"My Jesus to know and feel His blood flow,
Is life everlasting, is heaven below."

'This will comfort you in your heaviest affliction, extract the sting of death, and prepare you for the heaven above, where thy God shall be thy glory, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Till then may the beauty of the Lord our God be upon you.

'My love to dear mother, and believe me,

'Yours affectionately,

'SAMUEL DUNN.'

On the death of the young lady he wrote the following letter to the parents and family:

'ST. JUST,

'*May 9th*, 1870.

'My Dear Brother and Sister Drummond,—So our beloved,

thoughtful, dutiful, attentive, gentle, patient Elizabeth has peacefully passed away :

"She hath left her mates behind,
She hath all the storms outrode,
Found the rest we toil to find,
Landed in the arms of God."

'Your hearts bleed, you cannot but deeply feel, and I cannot but deeply sympathise with you, and yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope. All your ardent wishes and highest hopes concerning her are now realised. You desired that she might have a comfortable residence, and she has entered the palace of angels and God ; that she might have a suitable maintenance, and the Lamb now feeds her and leads her to living fountains of water; that she should have agreeable companions, and she is now associated with the wise and pure ; that she should be neatly clothed, and she is now arrayed in the fine linen, clean and white; that she should have all her wants supplied, and holy desires gratified, and she is admitted to *His* presence where there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

"Can we weep to see the tears
Wiped for ever from her eyes."

'Let us all be increasingly diligent in preparing to meet her in that serene and blissful region, where pain and parting shall be no more. There thy sun shall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

'Every blessing on you all, and believe me,

'Your affectionate friend,

'Samuel Dunn.'

He corresponded with several of the Presidents of the Conference and while the Wesleyan Conference was holding its sittings in Bradford in 1878, Mr. Dunn visited the town and was present as a visitor. He was quickly discerned by brethren who knew him and it was soon whispered around, 'that Samuel Dunn is in the Conference.' The President gave him a very hearty invitation to the platform ; to which he respectfully responded, amidst the hearty applause of the assembly.

The delegates from the Methodist Episcopal Church of the

United States present at this Conference were Bishop Bowman, D.D., and Dr. Havan, and they sought, and obtained, an opportunity to spend some time with Mr. Dunn, when the prospects of Methodism in general, in all parts of the world, were freely discussed.

The following editorial we take from the *Methodist Recorder* relative to this event :—

'Is Samuel also among the prophets again? Yes,—strange as it may seem, the Rev. Samuel Dunn, of "Everett, Dunn and Griffiths," has attended the opening of the Conference, and actually sat on the platform. He is a hale old man of more than eighty years, although he looks many years younger. He seemed delighted to be once more among Methodist preachers, and we may hope that, despite all the bitterness of the past long struggle, his coming in friendliness to the old Conference may be regarded as a promise that in future war-weapons shall be strangers to all our hands when face to face with each other, and that the various Methodist Churches shall be brotherly, united in spirit and on "visiting terms." "Ephraim shall not vex Judah; Judah shall not envy Ephraim."'

He visited various places, but in each while he rested he always found opportunity to proclaim the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as the following letter will show :—

'DANE FARM, MARGATE, Aug. 28th, 1879.

'Dear Dinnick,

'I have been twenty weeks in Margate, and have preached thirty sermons. For many weeks I felt the severe east winds trying, and saw it would not be wise to spend the winter here. What think you of Hastings for me? . . . Goodness and mercy still follow me. I am now in my eighty-second year and my removal from the scenes of earth cannot be distant. While I had strength I willingly used it in the best of services. I now seek retirement and quiet. Peace be with you.

'Yours affectionately,

'SAMUEL DUNN.'

'CROYDON, March 17th, 1880.

'You will not wonder that I have not answered your kind letters, when I tell you that I have been confined to my bed a

sufferer for 137 days. During autumn that I preached at Margate and the neighbourhood, I was intending to pass from it to Hastings; but a worthy Wesleyan family induced me to accompany them home to Lower Norwood—Nov. 2nd. I preached in the Primitive Methodist Chapel here, and while preaching had a sudden shock that staggered me—I was however enabled to get through the service. I had to take to bed at my nephew's, Charles Brown, and there never once moved out of the room for four months. Three weeks ago the doctor thought a change of residence would be beneficial, and I was removed to this house. My strength increases, and my appetite improves, and there is hope that in a few weeks I may get out and walk. The attack of *rheumatic neuralgia* commenced and has continued in my left leg and foot. If my strength still increases until able to walk, I *think* of Hastings; but all as yet is uncertain . . . writing is now labour and pain, and I must conclude. Every blessing on you both, and all.

'Affectionately, SAMUEL DUNN.'

'CROYDON, April 5th, 1880.

'Here I am still confined to my bed, after above 150 days suffering, and as many wearisome nights. The peculiarity of the malady is, that favourable and unfavourable symptoms change alternately—almost daily. Hence my hesitancy in writing to kind inquirers lest I have to contradict what I had said the previous day. However, there can be no doubt as to my improvement the last month. My health is good. I have had no disease—no outward wound, scar, scratch, or pimple. The attack at first was in my left foot and leg, and there the terrible warfare has been carried on. They are considerably improved, but not sufficiently to enable me to use them in walking. The doctor is very sanguine as to my restoration to my former health and strength. I am exceedingly sorry to have to put you to inconvenience and especially to keep you in such uncertainty. The doctor forbids my reading or writing, but I have again ventured. Let me hear from you.

'Affectionately, SAMUEL DUNN.'

Accompanied by his doctor he came to us at Hastings, May, 1880, where he improved so much in health as occasionally to be

able, with assistance, to take short walks, but more frequently he was drawn in a bath-chair to the sea-front. We felt it no mean privilege to minister to his wants. Hundreds of profitable hours we spent in his company while he imparted useful information. He delighted to sit in the twilight, or by the light of the fire of an evening, when he would lead in an instructive conversation, or join us in singing some of his favourite hymns by Charles Wesley, to old and tried tunes of solidity and power. His intercourse with God was habitual. He seemed to realise in a very devout sense the Divine presence. He spoke of the Lord Jesus his Redeemer and Saviour with deepest veneration, and would frequently ejaculate His praise. He would often break the moments of silence with a reference to his decease, saying:— 'It is a solemn thought that I shall soon have to *meet my God!*' . . . 'To enter into the presence of Deity is an overpowering thought.' . . . 'I shall see my Redeemer!' . . . 'My departure cannot be far distant. I have lived more than the allotted time of man.' He would then enumerate the ages of the Scripture characters, and of those who figured prominently in the ministry of the Lord Jesus whom he had known, giving dates of birth and death of each, making reference to their triumphant finish, saying: 'I shall soon join them.'

'E'en now, by faith, we join our hands
With those who went before,
And greet the blood-besprinkled bands
On the eternal shore.'

In the division and use of his time he was methodical to the end of his life. Although eighty-two years of age he usually commenced the day at four o'clock a.m., in reading the Scriptures and prayer until seven o'clock. Breakfast at half-past seven. Family prayer at eight. After this until ten o'clock he generally made himself acquainted with the leading topics of the day from the morning papers, and answered his numerous correspondents, then took refreshment in the form of a cup of warm milk and bread. Dined at twelve. Tea at four, and filled in the day with close reading and study, and retired to rest at eight o'clock. He read much although an invalid, and his mental faculties were vigorous, active, and unimpaired.

In his intercourse with his friends and visitors he was genial

and considerate. His birthdays were always observed with methodical regularity. The two letters below demonstrate this:—

'PENZANCE, Feb. 17th, 1872.

'Last Thursday, the 13th, I completed my *seventy-fifth* year in this quiet cottage alone. I spent the time in meditation, and in reading Charles Wesley's touching and instructive Birthday Hymns, and those portions of the Word of God which show the vanity of things earthly, and the reality and importance of things unseen and eternal.

'I am thankful that, as yet, my strength is not labour and sorrow; but I must not expect it to continue long. I think I preach with as clear a voice, and with as great freedom and energy, as at any former period of life. Last evening I had unusual liberty for one hour, preaching for the Bible Christians, from "And let the whole earth be filled with His glory: Amen and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." On Tuesday I preached for the United Methodists, and next Sabbath I am to give the New Connexion at St. Ives two missionary sermons. I have also assisted the Baptists and Congregationalists.'

'BRIGHTON, Feb. 22nd, 1873.—I passed my birthday in quiet retirement. It was with me a day of humiliation. But I would not be unthankful. Goodness and mercy have followed me *eighty* years through the wilderness. My health is much as usual, though I must be getting feebler, yet when preaching I have not felt it. I preached fewer sermons the last year than during any year of the sixty of my ministry; but not for want of strength, for I delivered fifty-four sermons, and could have doubled the number had I received invitations. I obtrude myself on no one. I preached for the Wesleyans last Sabbath—Hargreaves is the Superintendent.'

During his stay at Hastings the Œcumenical Methodist Conference was held in the City Road Chapel, London. In this gathering he took a deep interest, corresponded with many leading Methodist ministers in America as well as in England, and would have even ventured to have attended it as a hearer had he been residing there. He, however, addressed a lengthy epistle to that assembly which was full of deepest anxiety for the pros-

perity of the Church; which letter was not formally presented to that Conference by the President, on the ground that it came from a *private* individual.

Dr. Dewart, editor of the *Christian Guardian*, of Toronto, Canada, who, among others, visited him, and, making reference to him after his return to Canada from England, said:

'His long white beard and venerable appearance made him look extremely patriarchal. A painter would have found in him a good subject to represent Abraham, Job, or Elijah. He was in his eighty-fourth year, and the day we were there was the sixty-fourth anniversary of his beginning to preach, and the sixty-eighth of his membership. He kept up an intelligent, sympathetic interest in all that was going on in the world; but he was a perfect repository of Methodist history for the last seventy years. He greatly interested us by relating personal incidents about Adam Clarke and Gideon Ouseley. He told us that when he began to preach he had a list of the 900 ministers in the English Wesleyan Conference, and as their deaths occurred he marked them off. 'How many,' he asked, 'do you suppose remain? Just one.' Mr. Dunn, however, survived this one. Of the sixty-eight Presidents of the Wesleyan Conference (covering a period of seventy-two years) he was personally acquainted with all but two.'

In July, 1881, according to Conferential appointment, we removed from Hastings to Rochester, where Mr. Dunn intended to follow as soon as we were settled, and arrangements were made for his reception. In the interval he writes:—

'I am not well, I miss you much. O that I had wings like a dove, I would fly to you, but for the present I must postpone my coming.'

On January 18th, 1882, I went to see him, and found him cheerful and entertaining as usual. The following day he was taken with a severe attack of *biliary calculus*, followed by *peritonitis*. The attack placed him beyond medical aid. His sufferings were continuous and severe, all was done to relieve him that could be done. He was much in prayer, frequently ejaculating: 'My Saviour.' . . . 'My precious Saviour.' . . . 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' . . . 'Jehovah, take me! My Saviour, Jehovah, take me!' He frequently repeated many of his favourite

verses of Wesley's hymns, and within half an hour of his departure we read the Scriptures to him, and united in prayer, commending him to God our Father and Lord. He fully entered into this devotional exercise as we knelt around his bed, for he was fully conscious and seemed to retain all his mental faculties.

He whispered with much earnestness, 'The unutterable bliss!' 'The unutterable bliss!' He asked to be lifted out of bed, which request was granted. As he rested his feet on the floor and his head on my shoulder, he sweetly and quietly entered into that fuller realisation of the 'unutterable bliss,' into that rest prepared for the people of God. Thus this great and good man departed on the evening of January 24th, 1882. His remains were interred in Abney Park Cemetery, London, in the family vault of his nephew, J. Compton Rickett, Esq., there to rest until the morning when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised in incorruption and glory.

SERMON I.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST.

'LORD, IT IS GOOD FOR US TO BE HERE.'—*Matthew* xvii. 1.

THE Transfiguration is one of the most remarkable transactions recorded in the history of our Lord. It is given at length by three of the evangelists,—Matthew, Mark, and Luke; alluded to by the fourth, and noticed by Peter in his Second Epistle. It must be obvious to every attentive reader that an event of so singular and splendid a nature could not have been intended merely to astonish and please His disciples; while an ostentatious display of glory would have been unworthy of Himself. Some end—some important end must have been proposed, correspondent to the magnificent means employed for its accomplishment.

By referring to the circumstances which immediately preceded, we shall, perhaps, more clearly perceive its design. Peter, a few days before, made his noble confession, that Jesus is 'the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Our Lord then took occasion to intimate to His disciples the strange and unprecedented scenes through which He was shortly to pass—'how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed.' This communication was so unexpected, and so opposed to all the notions that they entertained of the Messiah's kingdom, that it filled them with astonishment and sorrow. He, however, not only informed them that *He* must suffer, but added, 'if any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.' And then, to induce them to comply with these terms of discipleship, He spake to them of the glory which should follow His sufferings, and of the reward which awaited His faithful followers. But still finding, perhaps, that even this did not entirely remove their prejudices, and reconcile them to sufferings, He condescended, six days after, to give them an ocular demonstration of His glory. 'He taketh Peter, James, and John'—the law required two or three witnesses to establish any important fact; and we may add, to *these* three disciples, our Lord appears to have been particularly attached—'He bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured

before them.' Let us now, by the assistance of Him, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ, and to show them unto us, contemplate the following particulars :—*the station selected ; the glory displayed ; the parties assembled ; the subject discussed ; and the effects produced.*

FIRST. *The station selected.* 'A high mountain'—said by tradition to be Tabor. Satan once took Christ up into a high mountain to tempt Him with all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them ; Christ now takes Himself up into a mountain to be free from all its temptations and distractions ; for He doubtless chose the scene for the greater convenience of retirement and devotion. There is, indeed, something in the sublimity, the silence, the solitude of a lofty mountain that seems calculated to awaken devotional feelings. Remote from our fellow-creatures, raised above the sin, and noise, and hurry of the world, our minds become composed and solemnized, and we appear to breathe celestial air, and to be admitted more directly to an audience with the Deity. And Christ, between whom and the Father there was a perfect oneness of affection ; whose mind, as appears from His frequent ejaculations, was continually upon God ; who had so oft retired to the shades of Gethsemane, and spent whole nights in the solitudes of the wilderness, and in a way at which we can be at no loss to know ; now goes up into a *mountain to pray ;* and '*as He prayed,*' while He was engaged in the heavenly exercise, 'The fashion of His countenance was altered.' Here He exhibits Himself not only for our admiration, but for our imitation. He reminds us that if *we* would be transfigured in our affections we must oft retire from the world, and pray unto Him who seeth in secret. There are *three* remarkable mountains to which we shall do well very frequently to follow our Lord. To the one where He delivered His unparalleled sermon—to Calvary—and to Tabor. If we follow Him to the first of these, we shall hear Him, as the Prophet sent from God, deliver the pure, the sublime, the heavenly precepts of Christianity. If we stand on the second, we shall behold Him, as the great High Priest of our profession, by the voluntary presentation of Himself upon the cross, make a free and a perfect atonement for the sins of the whole world. If we repair to the third, we shall witness a manifestation of that dignity which gave authority to His instructions as a Prophet, and infinite efficacy of His atonement as a Priest.

SECONDLY. *The glory displayed.* 'He was transfigured, and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light :' or as St. Mark expresses it, 'His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow ; so as no fuller on earth can white them.' There was a change, not in the substance of His body, for He was still mortal, and had to die, but in its outward form and appearance ; *a glorious change ;* for no

term could have been employed that would have given us a stronger idea of His splendour—'His face did shine as the *sun*,' the most resplendent object amid the whole astonishing magnificence of unintelligent creation. He received from God 'honour and glory.' He resumed some rays of that glory which He had with the Father before the world was. The Godhead displayed itself through the veil of His humanity. He showed those who beheld the body in which He tabernacled what an illustrious guest it had the honour to contain. The enshrined Divinity burst forth and arrayed His form with an intense and dazzling splendour, and communicated its radiance to His very garments, till mortality was all but swallowed up of life. The face of Moses was glorious when he came down from the mount, but it has here 'no glory, by reason of the glory that excelleth,' only 'the skin of his face did shine,' but the whole body of Christ was like the sun in his meridian splendour. The glory of Moses could be covered with a *Veil*, but that of Christ darted through His very garments; so that they, whatever was their colour before, were now of a *splendid white;* the emblem of innocence, purity, joy, and glory. He invested Himself with *light*—put it on as His beautiful dress. 'Our Lord became exceeding glorious, He was clothed with majesty and honour, He decked Himself with light as with a garment.'

This was, perhaps, intended to convince us of the *dignity of His character*. Under the Old Testament, the manifestation of *light* was the appropriate *symbol* of the *Divine presence*. Thus it was to Moses in the bush; and to the Israelites as they journeyed through the wilderness; for there was a cloud, which they called 'the glory of the Lord,' from the midst of which a wonderful brightness sometimes blazed forth with inexpressible splendour. Such a cloud filled the tabernacle, and afterwards the temple; and the splendour was so great at its dedication 'that the priests could not stand to minister before the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.' The Jews termed it the *Shekinah*, or habitation of the Deity. It was a special symbol of His immediate presence, a peculiar, striking manifestation of the Divinity. Light was the consecrated sign of Deity. With what propriety then did Christ assume it—did He array Himself in it who was emphatically 'the light of the world.' He had given other proofs of His Divinity; for He had given sight to the blind; unstopped the ears of the deaf; caused the lame to leap as a hart; cleansed lepers by a touch; fed thousands with a few loaves and fishes; walked on the sea as on a pavement of marble; hushed the tempest into a calm; raised the dead to life; and even forced infernal spirits to abandon their conquests, and relinquish their habitations. But here He gives a more splendid, or at least a *new* kind of evidence—a sensible display of His Godhead. Let us then turn

aside and see 'this great sight,' but let us take off our shoes, for the ground whereon we stand is holy, when we contemplate glory—the glory as of the only begotten of the Father; and doubt, if we can with such evidence flashing upon us, the supreme and eternal Divinity of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

But this astonishing manifestation of glory was perhaps intended to give us a more affecting view of the *wonderful humiliation* of our Lord. It has been well said, that the condition in which He appeared among men, humble, poor, weak, and despised, was a true and continual transfiguration; whereas the transfiguration on Tabor, in which He showed Himself in the real splendour of His glory, was His *true* and *natural* condition. 'He *was* rich' in all the infinite perfections and glories of the Godhead; 'but for our sakes He became poor.' He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant—was houseless, homeless, friendless. His humiliation and sufferings were *necessary*—necessary to the accomplishment of the great work of redemption which He had undertaken; but it is only when we contrast them with His dignity and glory, that we can take a correct view of them. Here then this manifestation of glory serves to throw His humiliation into deeper shades, and to heighten our astonishment at His condescension in assuming it—condescension that must fill all heaven with amazement. It was also, perhaps, intended to give us some idea of the *splendour with which He is now arrayed, and of the future glory of His followers.* It is true that He again underwent a momentary obscuration; but He now shines forth in all His native splendour. That glory was seen by Saul of Tarsus, on his way to Damascus; and by John, in the Isle of Patmos, when His 'countenance was as the sun shining in his strength.' But if He was, on a sudden, while on earth 'a Man of sorrows,' so gloriously transformed, what language can describe, what finite mind can conceive, the glory in which He appears, now that all His sufferings and humiliations are ended! A glory not transient, but permanent—a glory that infinitely transcends all the glory of this world; and that completely eclipses the glory of cherubim and seraphim. And surely that power which, in an instant, thus changed the appearance of His own body, can easily raise the bodies of the saints, and array them in glory and beauty, in incorruption and immortality. And 'we know that we shall be like Him.' His resplendent body is to be the illustrious model after which ours shall be conformed. For He 'shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.'

THIRDLY. *The parties assembled.* *Angels* were not summoned to

be His attendants on this memorable occasion. They indeed felt the most intense interest in all that He did on earth for mankind. They announced His birth, they ministered to Him in the wilderness, they strengthened Him in the garden, they proclaimed His resurrection, and when He ascended, they shouted Him welcome to the skies; and they are represented as looking, with profound attention and adoring wonder, into the mysteries of redemption. And here, had they received permission, legions, clothed in celestial radiance, would have covered the mount, and considered it their highest honour to pay homage to Him as their Lord. But as 'He took not on Him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham,' so He chose to be attended not by angelic beings, but by *glorified saints*. And out of the general assembly and Church of the first-born, that were then written in heaven, He selected but two—*Moses* and *Elijah*, who 'appeared in glory,'—arrayed in splendour resembling that of Christ, though doubtless inferior to it. As there is but *one* Moses mentioned in the Bible, there can be no doubt but that he who appeared on Tabor was the leader and lawgiver of Israel, whom 'the Lord knew face to face,' and who departed on Nebo according to the word of the Lord. There is not, however, the same certainty as to the Elijah who appeared on the occasion; for there are *two* Elijahs mentioned both in the Old and New Testament—Elijah the Tishbite, and Elijah the forerunner of our Lord—John the Baptist. I am inclined to think it was the latter, for the following reasons. The *forerunner* of our Lord was the *greatest* of all the prophets; for so Christ speaketh. 'John was a prophet; yea, more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send My messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily, I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist' (Matt. xi. 9-11). The Jews, indeed, expected that Elijah the Tishbite was to appear before the coming of the Messiah; but Christ shows that *John* was the promised Elias. 'For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come' (Matt. xi. 13-15). The harmony of construction seems to require it. For in *all* the other passages of St. Matthew's Gospel, in which the name Elias occurs, it is applied to *John*. In this paragraph it occurs *twice*. The first time there is no intimation of its being a different person, and the second, it is explained of the Baptist. 'Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist' (ver. 13). Had Elijah the Tishbite appeared, we can see little propriety in that question of the disciples, as they came down from the mount; 'Why then, say the Scribes, that Elias must first come?' But much, if it be explained of

the Baptist. And lastly, the *subject* of their conversation is more applicable to the *Baptist* than to the Tishbite. 'They spake of the *decease* which Christ should accomplish at Jerusalem.' This was suitable to the Mosaic economy; for in it the sacrificial death of Christ more particularly and openly had its 'beginning.' It continued to be the thread of 'all the prophets'' testimony, until John saw 'Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' There was nothing in the ministry of the Tishbite which particularly marked it as having any *special* reference to the *death* of Christ: but John's expressly pointed to Him as 'the Lamb of God.' For these reasons we think it was John, the New Testament Elijah, that was admitted, in company with Moses, to this solemn interview with our Lord. They may here be viewed as *delegates from the Church triumphant*—to intimate the interest which glorified saints still feel in 'the things of Christ.' We know that, 'There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth,' and surely the *redeemed* subjects in the heavenly kingdom will not be indifferent to the triumphs of Christ on earth. 'The kingdoms are but one.'

But Moses and Elijah must be considered as '*the natural and proper representatives of the Law and the Prophets.*' The transfiguration was the solemn recognition of our blessed Lord as the great Teacher, Saviour, and Lawgiver. The Scribes and Pharisees opposed Moses to Christ. And even the disciples thought that the ceremonial, as well as the moral, law was to continue in force for ever. But it was to 'be done away;' and here, the same authority that instituted it abrogates it. This is done in the most solemn and impressive manner. 'A bright cloud overshadowed them,'—casting a kind of veil over the splendours with which they were surrounded,; 'and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, this is My beloved Son,'—one greater than Moses, one greater than Elijah,—*they* were My *servants*, *this* is My *Son*,—they spake of Him as 'the Lamb of God;' and I, with the light of this excellent glory, can see in Him neither 'blemish nor spot':—'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him.' Can this mean anything less than that Moses and Elijah were now to transfer their authority to Christ; and that Peter, James, and John were to receive their commission, as apostles, from Him? That the Mosaic institutions are abolished, the predictions of the prophets fulfilled, the light-bringing, life-giving dispensation of the Gospel established? That Jesus is now the great Teacher, the exclusive Lawgiver, the only Sacrifice for sin, and the grand Mediator between God and man? Thus the same voice, from the same Shekinah, that gave to Moses his com-

mission and called Elijah to the prophetic office, filling him with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, commands them to deliver up the keys, the badges of their authority, into the hands of Christ. And now, behold Moses, whose symbols had received an explanation — whose types had met their antitype; and Elijah, whose saying was fulfilled, 'He must increase but I must decrease;' having ushered in the resplendent sun, retiring from the mount, and leaving Him as the sole object to whom we should apply for salvation, and who is to be exclusively heard and obeyed in all matters of faith, worship, and practice. Have *you* listened and obeyed? Again, consider His *claims*. He is God's *Son*—the *appointed* Teacher and Lord. Consider the *danger* of refusing. It shall come to pass, that whosoever refuseth to hearken unto Him shall be cut off from among the people.

The presence of Moses and Elijah served other subordinate purposes. It taught the *immortality of the soul;* for though they had long been dead—Moses for upwards of 1400 years—yet, *here they were*. It taught that *the state of separate spirits* is a state of *conscious* existence; and that the saints will *know each other in the next world*. Moses and Elijah were known by the disciples, whether by their appearance or conversation is not said; and will not Moses be known to Elijah, and Elijah to Moses, in heaven? And if so, is it reasonable to suppose that all the rest of the saints will be ignorant of each other? *How* we shall there know each other 'it doth not yet appear;' but we are justified in cherishing the thought, from the very strong presumptive evidence before us, as well as from other portions of Holy Writ, that our pious friendships formed on earth shall be renewed and perpetuated in eternity. What Christian bosom does not respond to the sentiment of the poet?—

> 'Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd, there be
> A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
> To shame the doctrine of the Sadducees
> And Sophists, madly vain of dubious lore;
> How sweet it were in concert to adore
> With those who made our mortal labours light!
> To hear each voice we feared to hear no more!
> Behold each mighty shade revealed to sight,
> The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who taught the right.'

FOURTHLY. *The subject discussed.* 'They spake'—not of the rise and fall of empires—of the inventions of art, and the discoveries of science; not of the scenes celestial, on which no human eye has gazed; but of a subject infinitely more important than any of these:—'they spake of that *decease* which He should accomplish at Jerusalem'—that *going out*—that *departure* of His; of that *death*, so special and

peculiar in its nature, necessity, circumstances, and design, which He should fulfil at Jerusalem; where in a few months He was to be betrayed, and forsaken, and denied, and mocked, and buffeted, and scourged, and condemned, and crucified—of that painful, that lingering, that ignominious death which He was shortly to endure, amidst the insults of men, the machinations of devils, and the hidings of His Father's face. But they would not dwell on the mere tragical circumstances, but on the glorious purposes to be accomplished by it. 'They spake' of *that death*, which had been foreknown and determined from the foundation of the world; which patriarchs desired, prophets foretold, and thousands of slaughtered lambs typified; of '*that death*' in which He should exhibit a perfect example for imitation, confirm the truth of the doctrines He had taught, magnify and make honourable the law we had broken, atone for the unnumbered sins of the human race, uphold and vindicate, and illustriously display the Divine perfections, make a show openly of principalities and powers, strike the sceptre from the hand of the king of terrors, shut up the gates of hell, and open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Yes, they spake of 'that death' which should bring *life* to the world, and be the *means* of conducting an innumerable company out of every nation, and people, and tongue, to the new Jerusalem; and which shall afford them a theme for praise throughout eternity.

Here then was an event well deserving the attention of this august and venerable assembly; an event that combines in it all that is interesting in the past, the present, and the future; involving alike the interests of time and eternity; an event which beggars description, and bewilders our loftiest conceptions.

But are you not taught by the interest which those glorified saints, who were saved in anticipation of the death of Christ, felt, and still feel in it, the *claims which it has on your attention?* Have you considered it? Have you looked upon Him whom you have pierced, and mourned? Have you personally apprehended and appropriated the merits of His death? Are you looking through it to be cleansed from all sin? Is it the daily subject of your meditation, conversation, triumph? Are you determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified? God forbid that you should ever glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! May that be the object of your faith, the foundation of your hope, the topic of your converse on earth, which is to be the subject of your loftiest anthems in heaven!

FIFTHLY. *The effects produced.* The disciples would first be filled with *surprise.* They were asleep at the commencement of the vision. Whether they were awoke by the voices, or by the glory with which

they were surrounded, we cannot tell; nor can we conceive of their astonishment when, on opening their eyes, they beheld the dazzling splendour of their Lord, saw Moses and Elijah in their celestial robes and heard them talk of His decease. You may gather what their *pleasure* was, from Peter's expression, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here.' The disciples were in heaven for the time. Everything around them was *good*. The scene was good. Tabor's top was never before capped with such splendour,—a splendour that eclipsed every other on this terrestrial ball. The company was good: Moses, Elijah, and Christ. The exercises and employment were good. They were contemplating the glory of their Lord, and listening to a conversation on the most interesting and important of all subjects. And Peter said 'Let us build here three tabernacles, one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elijah;' so enraptured was he, that he wanted the heavenly visitants to remain, that he might enjoy the felicity of this unexpected manifestation. 'But he knew not what he said.' It would *not* have been good for Moses and Elijah to have exchanged 'the building of God' for earthly tabernacles. Nor for Peter, James, and John to have remained there. They had to attest the truth of His mission, to preach His Gospel, and to suffer for His name's sake. *Nor for Christ.* Another, and a very different scene was awaiting Him in Gethsemane; Calvary was now calling for Him. Had He, therefore, remained on the Mount of Transfiguration, where would have been the glorious objects accomplished by His death? The world could not have been saved. For Christ effected our *redemption*, not on Tabor, but on Calvary: not by displaying, but by shrouding His glory. Tabor is the mount that the Christian will occasionally *visit;* but Calvary is the mount on which he would *dwell*. It is *here* that he finds obligations the most binding, and pleasures the most pure; that he learns lessons the most important, and secures blessings the most valuable.

The sentiment then of Peter must be guarded. It would not have been good for them to have remained on the mount. He soon thought so himself; for when the bright cloud overshadowed them, he with James and John fell on their face and were sore afraid. Here was a sudden change from joy and ecstasy to terror and amazement. They were not able to bear the glory that surrounded them, but were overwhelmed and confounded. In condescension to their weakness and frailty, Jesus, who felt no terror, being familiar to such glory, came and touched them and said, 'Arise, and be not afraid'—strength was instantly communicated, and their fears dispelled.

But there are scenes even on earth in which, with propriety, we may adopt the language, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here.'

In the sanctuary. There He yet manifests His glory, and blesses His people, shedding light on their understandings, and filling their hearts with gladness. *At His table,* where our faith has so often been increased, our hope confirmed, our love inflamed, our joy cherished, and our brotherly affection strengthened. *And in the closet,* when we have shut the door to the world, and He has 'come in,' and talked with us, as a man talketh with his friend,—how good! Yet it would not be good for us always to *continue* in these scenes. *Here* we wait upon the Lord to renew our strength; we go out to employ it, retaining, like Moses, the lustre upon our countenance; we must let our 'light shine before men;' and also suffer for Christ before we can reign with Him.

But *there are scenes in which the sentiment shall be fully realised.*

'With Him we on Zion shall stand.'

If it then be so good to be *here,* even here, what must it be in *heaven,* that glorious palace of our King! If so good to witness a *partial* display of His glory, what must it be, when we shall see Him 'as He is,' in all His uncreated beauties and divine majesty! If so good to see Him attended with only *two* of His saints, what must it be to see Him encircled by *ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands!* If so good to listen to a conversation about sufferings and *death,* what must it be to join in shouts of triumph, and songs of praise, when the former things shall have passed away! If so good when their *bodies* were torpid through sloth, and their *souls* agitated by fear, what must it be when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and the faculties of our spirits be strengthened to bear the 'weight of glory' to be revealed! If so good to witness the manifestation on Tabor for a *few minutes,* or at the longest for a *few hours,* what must it be to stand under His direct rays, to catch the splendours to which we shall be exposed, to resemble the brilliance with which we shall be filled, to enjoy communion the most intimate and delightful, to be favoured with a vision and fruition *uninterrupted* and *eternal! That* will be heaven.

SERMON II.*

THE LOVE OF GOD.

GOD IS LOVE.—1 *John* iv. 16.

WE have here, with one stroke of the pencil, a correct, attractive, and finished portraiture of Deity; such as philosophy never furnished after its most laborious and lengthy researches. It totally eclipses, and reduces to utter insignificance, every conception of the Supreme Being found in the writings of the ancient poets and philosophers, statesmen and historians. *God is love.* The axiom is unique. How simple, yet sublime; compressed, yet comprehensive; so self-evident as to require no argumentation, transparent without analysis, beautiful without embellishment, pure without a taint, perfect without a defect, fixed without the least tendency to change. It is a description of God by His own inspiration; as if specially intended, as it is admirably adapted, to arrest attention, excite admiration, generate affection, kindle adoration, afford consolation, and facilitate imitation. We approach it with fear and trembling, lest we darken it by unmeaning words, tarnish it with our breath, mar it by our touch, and weaken the impression its announcement may have made, by any attempt at explanation or amplification. Yet it is written for our instruction, edification, and comfort: we take the shoes from our feet, for the ground is holy, and draw near to see this great sight. May strength divine be afforded. What in us is dark, illumine; what is low, raise and support.

God is love. *God*—the very name is music in our ears. It cheers the heart, expands the vision, and gives a loftier note to our loftiest song. It means *good*. God and good are convertible terms. When our pious Saxon ancestors thought, or spoke, or wrote of God, they meant the *Good* Being, who devises, diffuses, and promotes happiness; the Great Fountain of benevolence, beneficence, and all blessings.

God *is*. He exists. There is such a being. The inspired penmen do not attempt to *prove* His existence; they *assume* it. The Bible opens

* Preached in the Bible Christian Jubilee Chapel, London, April 9th, 1876.

with this magnificent language, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.' His existence forms the broad, firm, immovable basis on which our hope of immortality rests. If there is no God, the pillared firmament is rottenness, and earth's base built on stubble. If no God, there can be no religion; no system can be binding, every person is at liberty to think, speak, and do as seemeth good in his own eyes. There can be no agreement in faith, morals, or worship, if there is no Supreme Being to whom all may appeal as an authority. We do not, however, suppose that there are any innate ideas of God existing in our minds at birth, growing with our growth, and strengthening with our strength. Nor do we think that any inspection of the visible, material creation would ever lead to the vast conception of an invisible, immaterial, spiritual, incorruptible, infinite, and eternal Being. We cannot by searching find out God. He can only be known as He is pleased to reveal Himself; can only be seen in His own light. But He left not Himself without witness. He came forth from the thick darkness. No doubt, the instant He called our first parent into being He made known unto him his Creator, and the idea once possessed, proofs multiplied in every direction.

If God *is*, He must be our Moral Governor, the Being with whom we have to do, and to whose scrutinising eye all our thoughts, words, and actions are exposed; at whose bar we must stand; to whom we must give an account; and by whom our characters will be dissected, and our eternal destinies weighed and fixed. To know His character must be to us a matter of supreme importance, and of universal interest; whether He is good or evil, benevolent or malevolent. 'The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.' Some only use His sacred name to give point to their coarse, senseless jokes, and emphasis to their horrid falsehoods and blasphemies. And there are would-be philosophers, who profess to believe there is a God, but their God is not our God; they deny His providence, shut Him out of His own world, or impugn the wisdom with which He governs it; snatch from His hand the balance and the rod; rejudge His justice; be the god of God. Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools. If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. The text tells us, not only that God is, but *what* He is.

God is *love*, and that not merely lovely or loving, but emphatically *love*. We cannot comprehend the love of an infinite nature; but from all the representations of it in the Scriptures we gather that it is somewhat analogous to human affection. We dare not attempt a formal definition of it, yet we may profitably meditate on some of its PROPERTIES. God is *essential* love. His love is not an adventitious acquisition, an

arbitrary principle, a transient emotion, a mere appendage. If a contingency, it must have had a beginning, and if so, it may be dispensed with, and then it will be possible for Him to act in opposition to it, and become *hatred*. But the perfections of His nature render this impossible. Love is not something implanted in Him from without, but inherent; not something attached to Him, but His nature, Himself, unoriginated, underived, of which He cannot divest Himself. He can no more cease to be love, than He can cease to be God. No evil can possibly proceed from Him; as darkness is not from the sun.

God is *eternal* love. Whatever is essential to any being is co-existent with that being. If God is eternal, His love is eternal. Like Himself, it no beginning knew: it was before the first archangel sang an anthem, or the first star poured its rays where all before was darkness and desolation. There never was a period in which God was not love. Do you ask, What could He love, when no creatures were in existence? we answer, Love Himself. The perfection of beauty, possessed of all possible excellence, He was the supreme object of His love. But there were three Persons equally Divine and glorious in the undivided Godhead, and with them love was displayed in immanent acts of complacency and delight,—ineffable, unutterable, and full of glory. Christ said, when on earth—'Father, Thou hast loved Me before the foundation of the world.' Again, 'Glorify Thou Me with the glory I had with Thee before the world was.' And before 'His works of old,' His delights were with the sons of men, intending their creation, and, in case of their fall, making provision for their redemption. His loving heart pressed forward to embrace them; Christ was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. He thus loved us with an everlasting love.

God is *infinite* love. What is essential to any being must be coextensive with that being. In every point of the immensity of space God is, and He is there in the fulness of His love. It therefore can have no bounds or dimensions. It is a vast, unfathomable sea, bottomless, shoreless, illimitable; unconfined by friendships, relationships, or partialities; knowing nothing of geographical boundaries; forgetting none, passing by none, whatever their colour or outward condition, but embracing every creature that He has made. I cannot go where universal love smiles not around. 'Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord.' Above all, for all, through all, and in you all. An everywhere present Deity, in the void waste as in the city full, and where He vital breathes there must be joy.

God is *disinterested* love. In Him it is absolutely spontaneous. He is under no obligation or constraint to love. Indebted to none, dependent on none, He is self-sufficient and all-sufficient. Infinitely happy in

the possession and contemplation of His own matchless excellencies, He can have no accession to His bliss, no augmentation of His glory, no increase to His wealth, from the exercises or objects of His love. In one sense the love of the creature is voluntary. Love cannot be forced; yet the love of no creature is absolutely spontaneous. He is under law to love. He cannot select the objects of his love. He is amenable to a higher tribunal for its exercise. Motives from *without* prompt him;—the attractiveness of the object, or benefits received or expected. The love of God soars away above all such considerations. He is a law unto Himself, and cannot be referred to any higher authority than His own. If you ask the source of Divine love, you must rise above all heights to God, and you will find that it owns no reason but Himself, no motive but Himself. He loves, *because He is love.*

God is *unchangeable* love. If essential, it can admit of no interruption, transition, diminution, exhaustion, or cessation. Love, like Himself, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. What He once loved, He still loves, and will continue to love. You are not to draw from this glorious truth the conclusion that once in grace, you are necessarily always in grace; once a child of God, you cannot possibly cease to be such; that sonship is unchangeable. If this were true, Adam could not have fallen, for he was originally a son of God, and no sinner can be converted, for we are by nature children of the wicked one. Again, it should be remembered, that faith is the condition of sonship. 'Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' So long, therefore, as you live by faith, and hearken to the dictates, yield to the influences, and cultivate the graces of the Holy Spirit, He will continue to witness to your sonship; but if you make shipwreck of faith, and grieve the Spirit, He will take His departure from you. 'And if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His.' It is moral character that God loves, and not merely flesh and blood. *Saints* are lovely in His sight, and so long as you remain such, and He sees *His image* in you, you are objects of His love; but if you yield to temptation and follow that which is evil, you forfeit His favour, and lose His image; and He, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, can no longer delight in you. While you are under the direct rays of the material sun you have light and heat, but close your eyes, or shut yourself in an underground cellar, and you are in darkness and coldness; but the sun has not changed, it is you that have changed. Thus it is that while you do the will of God you walk in the light; disobey Him and you are in darkness

and gloom. Were God to love a holy character to-day and an unholy one to-morrow, His love would be changeable. This, we have seen, is impossible, for it is an essential perfection. He says, 'I love them that love Me;' so that if you continue in His love, He will love you unto the end, and you may take up the triumphant language of the apostle: 'I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

God is *pre-eminent* love. Men often speak of the attributes of God as if they were distinct from Himself, or separate portions of Himself, forgetting that they are perfections inhering in one infinite, undivided spiritual Essence. Men also speak of the harmony of the Divine attributes—a theological technicality. If they mean that all the essential attributes of an infinite Being are infinite, they are correct. Or if they mean that one attribute of Deity is never displayed at the expense, the obscuration, enfeeblement, or abandonment of the others, this is also true. But if they affirm that all His attributes are equally displayed, at all times, in all places, in His every action, or manifestation, they are in error. From the text, and from other representations of God, love is *conspicuous*. It shines with a lustre peculiarly its own. We say of the perfections of the Creator as of the graces of the creature, the greatest of these is love. It has often been remarked, that though God is wise, powerful, and just, He is never represented as wisdom, power, or justice in the *abstract*. Love appears to be the combination of His perfections, and to stand in equal relation to them all. It adorns, connects, regulates, pervades, sustains, and perfects all the rest. Wisdom never devises a plan, but in love; power is never put forth, but in love; and justice is never displayed, but in love. These are all essential to love; diversifications or modifications of the same excellency. Love includes them all. According to the character of those on whom it is set, and the manner in which it is displayed, various terms are employed to represent it. If the objects are holy, love is complacency; if poor and wretched, love is compassion; when it showers its gifts, it is goodness; when it grants pardon, it is mercy. But in all these respects love is transcendental. He takes pleasure in His saints, is full of compassion, abundant in goodness, delighteth in mercy, is the Father of mercy, is rich in mercy, mercy rejoiceth against judgment. When Moses prayed, 'Show me Thy glory,' God said, Come up to Me in the holy mount, and I will cause all My goodness to pass before thee. Thus showing that goodness is His glory, and His highest honour; that love is the brightest, richest gem in His diadem, the crowning attribute of His character, the sum of His

excellences, and the perfectness of His perfections. But I lose myself in Him, in light ineffable. His love recedes as we approach it, enhances its splendour as we contemplate it, and increases its riches as we attempt to calculate them. Its height we cannot reach, its breadth we cannot span, its depth we cannot fathom. God only knows the love of God.

We now pass from the consideration of its *properties* to trace a few of its MANIFESTATIONS. Here the evidences are innumerable and overwhelming. *Creation* is a proof that God is love;—what could have induced Him, who was infinitely happy in Himself, with omnipotent resources, to create us, but a desire to communicate happiness to His creatures? *Providence* is a proof. He openeth His bountiful hands, and supplieth all things plenteously. 'The earth is full of His goodness,' His *long-suffering* is a proof. He is 'slow to anger, ready to forgive, not willing that any should perish, but that all should repent and live.' The *Bible* is a proof. It contains everything necessary to be believed, in order to our present and everlasting salvation. The *ministry* He has established, and the various *means of grace* He has appointed, for our edification and consolation, are all clear, striking proofs; but we cannot linger: we press on, ascend the heights of Calvary, stand under the hallowed shade of the cross, look up at the great, glorious, spotless, and infinite victim; and here we find the greatest display of His love in the bestowment of His greatest gift. Every other manifestation is dimmed by the brighter splendours of His love in our redemption. God gave His Son, His only Son, His well-beloved Son: gave Him unasked and for a world of sinners, in whom there was nothing lovely or meritorious. Gave Him to all the innocent infirmities of our nature; to sufferings and death, ignominious, excruciating, indescribable, unknown.

But I must not enter further into this great subject. I only ask your attention to a few passages of Scripture, from which it will still more strikingly appear, that as love was the brightest attribute of God, the gift of His Son was the highest possible expression of it.

Mark the peculiarity of the language, as expressive of the superexcellence, surpassing greatness, of this display of His love. 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.' Again, 'He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things.' Again, 'God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' Again, 'Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us. In this was manifested the love of God toward us.' Again, 'Herein is love,' as if before it had never been seen. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' Illustration, manifestation, commendation,

demonstration can go no farther. Heights, depths, to reach to finite minds, denied, O cherubim, to you; it is mystery.

But what lessons are we to learn from the entire subject?

God is love. We are, therefore, under a thousand obligations to *love* Him. This conclusion is irresistible. To deny it is to invert the very order of things, and to open a door for confusion and every evil work. Yet love to God is but in partial operation among men. Christ, when on earth, said to some of His hearers, 'I know you, that you have not the love of God in you.' If this is the case with any present, we speak it to your shame. His beauty beautifies heaven. The excellences of all the angels are but faint emanations of His glory: before it, they veil their faces, and cast their crowns, filled with reverence, admiration, and delight. Yet you, His own offspring, have not His love in you. He has given you life, and breath, and all things richly to enjoy; watched over you by day and by night, preserved from dangers, and extricated you from perplexities; yea, sent His Son to die for you, His Spirit to strive with you, and His Word to guide you, and you have not His love in you. He has endowed you with understanding and will, and breathed into you a soul capable of love, possessed of love, and yet you have not *His* love in you. You take the gifts, and forget the Giver. Love the creature, yet not the Creator: the world, and the things of the world, but the love of the Father is not in you. His first and great commandment is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.' Yet you deliberately violate it, and dash it under your feet. Unnatural conduct, horrid ingratitude, unaccountable stupidity, audacious rebellion, dangerous proceeding. Yet, because He is a God of love, He asks your love, and waits to be gracious. Then at once drop your weapons, and acquaint yourselves with Him. Grieve for having grieved Him, return penitentially, and by faith in the great Atoning Sacrifice, and, 'being justified by faith, you shall have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God will be shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost given unto you.' Then you will say with the beloved disciple, in a verse following—'We love Him, because He first loved us.' And now, having had much forgiven, love much. Surrender yourselves entirely unto Him. Concentrate your affections on Him. Seek in all things to please Him. Delight yourselves in Him. Let Him be your all in all: your theme, your inspiration, and your crown.

God is love. Then *imitate* Him. You do violence to your nature not to do it. 'Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.' Love what He loves, and hate what He hates; do what He enjoins and avoid what He prohibits. 'If God so loved us, we ought also to love one

another.' 'He that loveth not knoweth not God.' 'He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen. But if we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.' But God is loving to every man, and His tender mercies are over all His works. Like Him, breathe the purest benevolence to every human being. Strive to lessen the dreadful aggregate of human misery, and to increase the sum of human happiness. Open your hearts wide, and be enriched to all bountifulness. By your instructions, invitations, and example thin the ranks of the enemy, and swell the army of our Great Captain. God is ready to forgive, and His command to you is, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.'

God is love. Then diligently seek a *preparation* to dwell with Him in His own heaven. There love finds its native soil, and rises to perfection. If you have not the love of God in you, heaven you can never enter. There His splendour would be insufferable to you. With pure spirits you could hold no intercourse; you would be solitary in the presence of the great multitude. Your impure feet would pollute the golden streets, and your corrupt breath poison the fountain of life. But the experiment will never be made. 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' Then make it the great object of your pursuit. Love is its element. The pure in heart shall see God; shall be received, commended, glorified, beautified, by the greatest and loveliest of Beings. 'In His presence there is fulness of joy, at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore.'

'Entranced in glory's peerless blaze,
Conformed to Him, on Him to gaze.'

SERMON III.

A TRUMPET CALL; OR, PLAIN THINGS FOR THOSE WHO NEED THEM.

'CRY ALOUD, SPARE NOT, LIFT UP THY VOICE LIKE A TRUMPET, AND SHEW MY PEOPLE THEIR TRANSGRESSION, AND THE HOUSE OF JACOB THEIR SINS.'—*Isaiah* lviii. 1.

'BUT who is sufficient for these things?' What minister has sufficient wisdom, zeal, courage, to expose the besetments of his hearers, to bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and to denounce the judgments of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men? It is the faithful minister's consolation, that the grace which Christ supplies *is* sufficient. Yet it must be acknowledged that this is one of the most difficult and unpleasant duties which he has to perform. For though men generally love and practise iniquity, yet they wish to *appear* otherwise, both in their neighbours' estimation, and in their own. Hence, they dislike, if they do not condemn, plain, pointed, powerful, heart-searching sermons; they would have preachers to be gentle, calm, and dispassionate,—to avoid everything calculated to harrow up the careless soul, to terrify the guilty conscience, and to wound the polluted heart. It is true, were we to hearken to such persons, we might spare our strength, perhaps procure the character of being charitable preachers, and avoid the censure of those who love 'smooth things.'

But, ah, my hearers! do you not know that dreadful diseases require dreadful remedies, that obstinate cases require powerful means? Were you all of a teachable and quiet spirit, we would simply say, 'Learn of Him who is meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls.' Were you all 'going on weeping, enquiring the way to Zion, with your faces thitherward,' we would gladly say, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' Were you each enquiring, 'What must I do to be saved?' you should at once receive the answer, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' If you were alive to your spiritual malady, we would immediately direct you to 'the Fountain open for sin and uncleanness.' But, alas! this is not the case with many of you. You are diseased, and yet you will not believe it. Every means, therefore, should

be employed, calculated to discover unto such their real character, and to save them from their danger. We should 'cry aloud and spare not, lift up our voice like a trumpet, and show them their transgressions and their sins.' We cannot, but at our peril, refuse to do it ; for this is the commission which every minister receives from God. We shall, therefore, by His assistance, attempt, first, an explanation of this commission ; and secondly, the execution of it.

I. LET US EXPLAIN THE COMMISSION.

Cry aloud. That is, either literally, Speak with a loud voice ; or figuratively, Be plain, faithful, and earnest in thy addresses, remonstrances, and reproofs among the people ; let the manner of thy speaking intimate the importance of thy subject,

Spare not. Spare not *thyself:* Do not be afraid of a little labour or fatigue, or a few hardships. It is better to wear away by *labour* than by *rust ;* therefore throw thy soul into thy work ; exert all thy strength. Spare not thy *hearers:* Do not forbear to speak whatever I command thee, for their conviction and their conversion. Accept no man's person. Show no partiality. Spare neither rich nor poor, old nor young, learned nor illiterate, though their contempt and ill-will be the consequence. But spare not : Do not touch them as if afraid of giving a little pain, but firmly apply the instrument, probe the wound, search it to the bottom, lay it bare to the bone.

Lift up thy voice like a trumpet. This is either synonymous with, 'Cry aloud ;' or, it means, Let thy voice be like that of a trumpet—a *warning* voice. Let it be loud and shrill, that it may be heard far and wide. Let it be intelligible, not giving any uncertain sound ; but let it send forth such alarms as all may hear and understand.

Show My people their transgression. The Jews were frequently designated 'the people of God,' without reference to their personal goodness or badness ; but, simply, because they acknowledged Jehovah, and were chosen by Him to certain external privileges. To them 'pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God.'

The house of Jacob. They were so called, because they were the descendants of the venerable patriarch of that name. But show even THEM their transgression. Do not hesitate because of the relation in which they stand to Me. Flatter them not with honourable titles. Daub them not with untempered mortar. Cry not, 'Peace, peace,' when I have not spoken peace. Do not conceal or extenuate ; but show them their sins, their ingratitude, treachery, rebellion, pride, avarice, hypocrisy, formality, adultery, idolatry. Show them the *heinous char-*

acter of their sins; that they are committed against the light of their understandings, the convictions of their consciences, and the tenderest instances of Divine Mercy. Show them the *transgression* of their sin; that it is opposed to My nature, law, government, and design; that it attacks the rights of My throne, and obscures the glory of My attributes; that it disrelishes My holiness, contemns My wisdom, vilifies My goodness, defames My justice, denies My omniscience, and insults My power. Show them those sins which they have committed and forgotten, and those which they are now committing, but which they will not acknowledge to be sins. Pierce, with the two-edged sword, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and discover to them the thoughts and intents of their hearts. Show them the *consequences* of their sins; that 'the wages of sin is death;' that 'the soul that sinneth shall die;' that My law requires this; that My *justice* demands it; that My *word* declares it; and that even *reason* teaches it. Thus show them their transgression and their sins. Set them before their eyes—use every means within the power of speech to exhibit them in all the aggravated circumstances that have rendered them so flagrant. Paint them in as striking colours as possible, and hold the frightful picture up to their view, till they shudder at the sight, start back with horror and amazement, and resolve to put away all their abominations.

The propriety of our doing this must appear, if you will but consider

The value of your souls. Souls that came from God; that are capable of knowing, fearing, loving, serving, and enjoying God; souls which possess the most astonishing intellectual faculties and moral capabilities; souls that have been purchased by the blood of Christ, 'a price all price beyond,' and for the salvation of which a most wonderful apparatus of means has been appointed; souls which are the objects of keen contest, and for an ascendancy over which there is, this moment, a mighty struggle between Jehovah and the powers of darkness; souls that may smile at the drawn dagger, and defy its point; that shall outlive the attacks of disorder, and the assaults of death; that shall survive the injuries of time, and the funeral of nature; that will live and act, separate from the body; and which, throughout eternity, will either be indescribably happy or inconceivably miserable. But these souls of yours are *guilty* and *depraved*, infected with a dreadful disease, oppressed by a base usurper, and bound down by twice ten thousand chains. And would you have us to trifle with these souls? to sport with your immortal spirits? to have an effectual remedy in our possession, and yet refuse to apply it, for fear of giving you a momentary pain? Would you forgive that physician, who, while you were labour-

ing under a dreadful bodily distemper, made light of it, seemed quite unconcerned about it, because he would not put you to a little uneasiness? In proportion as the soul is more valuable than the body, would be the guilt of him who trifled with the former, compared to his who evinced unconcern about the health of the latter. But consider, while you live in sin,

The blessings which you are losing. A free, full, and universal pardon of your past iniquities, an adoption into God's family, the witness of God's Spirit, a participation of the Divine Nature, spiritual illumination and consolation, a peace that passeth understanding, and a joy that is unspeakable. And are these blessings of so little worth, that they may be wisely given up for mere sensual gratifications? And when you come to die (and *die you must!*) you will not be admitted into the society of saints and angels, to the vision and fruition of God, to that fulness of joy which is in His presence, and to those pleasures for evermore which are at His right hand. Sin *must* incapacitate you for the felicity of heaven. While you commit it, you can have no *title;* for 'the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' You can have no *meetness;* nothing in you adapted to the kind of happiness that is current there. All—all will be lost if you continue in sin. Now suppose you saw some of your friends or neighbours indifferent about some worldly emolument, of which they stood much in want; or if you heard of a feast provided for the poor and needy, and perceived them careless and unconcerned about it; would you not feel some warm emotion in your breast? would you not endeavour, by some means or other, to convince them of their folly, their ingratitude, their danger? And shall ministers be indifferent, when they see you neglecting the unsearchable riches of Christ, and despising glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life? Consider

The evils to which you are exposing yourselves. If you live in sin it will continue more and more to darken your understanding, to blind your judgment, to pervert your will, to harden your heart; and you *must be miserable*, for there is a necessary connection between sin and misery. It will throw your passions into tumult, render your appetites ungovernable, raise a war in your breasts, and change the temple of peace into a den of dragons. Conscience, that was intended to be your guardian angel, will become an avenging fiend; an ever-present, mysterious, but impalpable enemy; that can dart its arrows from an invisible hand, and transfix them in your bosom. To attempt to escape from its indignation will be in vain. If you take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, it is *there.* If you shroud yourself in darkness, 'as a spirit it will pass before you, and the hairs of your

flesh will stand on end.' But when you have done with earth, you will 'be turned into hell,' to spend an eternity in thinking of happiness for ever lost, in disordered conceptions, cutting reflections, in stinging remorse, the upbraidings of old companions, the scoffs of devils, and in drinking the cup of the wrath of Almighty God, that will be poured out without mixture,—misery without bounds and without termination! Now suppose you saw a fellow-creature exposed to some dreadful calamity, would you not warn him of it? If you saw a blind man on the brink of some awful precipice, about, the next step, to fall over, would you not cry aloud to him in order to prevent the evil? How much more then should we call on those of you who are standing on the breaking brink of perdition; or rather, who are hair-hung, breeze-shaken, hanging over the burning lake! Again: If you saw a neighbour's house on fire, while he was asleep, unconscious of danger; you would not think it improper to alarm him, by any means you could employ, if so be his life might be saved. The cold and apathetic saying of one, 'Why take so much pains?' or that of another listless creature, 'He is asleep, let him alone!' would not stop YOU. No, you would cry out the more, 'Awake, thou that sleepest!' And is it not just, right, and merciful, for ministers to sound an alarm upon the holy mountain, that fearfulness and trembling may seize the sinners in Zion? And we also remind you,

That ministers themselves are interested in your salvation. They are the ambassadors of God, the messengers of the Churches, and the glory of Christ. And are they to hear the name of that God, to whom they feel an inviolable attachment, blasphemed; to see His laws violated, His Sabbaths profaned, and His sanctuaries treated with contemptuous neglect; and yet sit as those in whose mouth there is no reproof, and yet not labour to swell the army of their Captain with recruits from the enemy's party? They know that though their success may not be equal to their wishes, 'though Israel be not gathered, their judgment is with the Lord, and their reward with their God.' But ministers *watch* for souls, as they that must give up an account. It is not optional with them whether they will do this part of their work or not. If they sleep at their post, and neglect to 'lift up their voice like a trumpet;' or daub their hearers with untempered mortar, tremendous will be the consequences. That was a weighty saying of an English Archbishop, when dying: 'I have passed through many places of honour and trust, both in Church and State, more than any of my order for seventy years before; but were I sure, that, by my preaching, I had converted but one soul to God, I should herein take more comfort, than in all the honours and offices that have ever been bestowed upon me.' But what account

will he have to give at the *last tribunal* who neglected to sigh and cry for the abominations in the land, and to warn sinners of their danger *There* stands the unfaithful preacher, most wretched, most contemptible, most vile! On his hands is seen the blood of souls. He prophesied smooth things, and even told lies for gain. What cursing now is heaped upon his head, by ruined souls, who charge him with their murder!

But if ministers are faithful, and succeed in turning you from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, they effect a work with which nothing that the mere men of this world achieve can bear a comparison; and between the latter and the former there must be a difference, as great as there is between the light of a glimmering taper and of the sun when he goeth forth in his strength. 'Let him know, that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.' And must not this afford him pleasure the most exquisite? a joy which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it? And will it not ensure, in the world to come, a reward which no mortal language can describe, and no finite mind can conceive? 'What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at His coming?' 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.

If such be the nature and reasonableness of the commission, we proceed

II. To the execution of it. To cry aloud and lift up our voice like a trumpet, and show you *your* transgression and your sins.

You stand in nearly the same relation to God as the Jews of old stood. 'He hath not so dealt with any other people.' You may have copies of the word of God at the most moderate price. His ministers have not removed into a corner. You have an open vision; line upon line, and precept upon precept. But, after having been thus *graciously* exalted to heaven, you may be *judicially* brought down to hell. To prevent this, we would show you your sins. That you are all sinners, both by nature and practice, is evident from the whole tenor of revelation, and is incontrovertibly proved by matter of fact. Look around you on the complicated abominations and miseries of mankind; or rather look *within* you. Do you not feel averse from good, and prone to evil? that your carnal mind is enmity against God? that your heart is a spiritual Babylon, where every sin, however heinous, lies as it were in embryo; where you may discover the seed and principle of all those lusts which have produced such mischief in every age; where you may find an abridged history of the most

notorious offenders? Enter into its chambers of imagery; follow it through its various intricate windings; go down into its deep, dark caverns; and is it not a hold of every foul spirit, a cage of every unclean and hateful bird; 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked'? But, perhaps, you all acknowledge that you are sinners, yet some of you do not like to have your *particular* sins exposed; if, however, a knowledge of a disease is half its cure, we must enumerate different classes, and *show* you your transgression.

The Profane. We trust there are not many in this assembly who are so depraved as to glory in their shame, to count it pleasure to riot in the day-time, and to declare their sin as Sodom. But if there be here a daring infidel, a bold blasphemer, an open Sabbath-breaker, a beastly drunkard, a lascivious adulterer; we would immediately warn such of their wickedness and danger. You are sinning against God, against society, against yourselves. You are disgracing your characters, destroying your health, wasting your property, breaking the hearts of your wives, beggaring your children, and ruining body and soul. Reason and conscience, the word of God and the Spirit of God, all combine to declare, that you are of your father the devil; for his works ye do; true sons of Belial, the first-born of Satan. Verily, ye are in the highway to perdition, fattening for the day of slaughter, ripening for the fire which never shall be quenched. There can be but one opinion respecting you. We do not see any ground on which, in your present state, you can hope for salvation. You may talk of the mercy of God, of the death of Christ, and of what you please; but we ask, What has that man to do with mercy, who lives in the open violation of the laws of his country, who determines to persevere in such proceedings, and who even offers insults in the face of his Judge? God will by no means clear the guilty He will rain upon the wicked, snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of your cup.

Pharisees. The character of such is described in the verses following the text, and shown to be very defective. And how many are there in the present day, who, trusting in themselves that they are righteous, despise others! Do not some of *you* think, that God must esteem you, and will at last save you, *because* you are not as other men? because you attend a place of worship, occasionally read your Bibles, and *say* your prayers? because you are industrious, frugal, and 'pay every man his due'? But the essence of religion does not consist in mere forms of worship, and acts of morality. Your outward ceremonies bear no nearer resemblance to vital religion itself than the picture of a man does to a living man. Your righteousness is as unlike the righteousness which is by faith in Christ as the garments which now cover you are unlike the

white robes which adorn the saints in glory. If yours be real religion, why did the Son of God come into the world? 'I am come,' said He, 'that ye might have life.' But you have a form, and deny its life, its power. Why did He die, if you can be saved by your own goodness? What need was there of atonement, if your self-righteousness will answer the end? Why was the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, if you require no washing, or if you can cleanse yourselves? And why is the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, if you can raise yourselves thither by your own exertions? O reflect for a moment! Is not pride or impenitency at the bottom of all your morality? Like Jonah's gourd, it has a worm at the root; and when the sun of temptation shall shine upon you, or the cold hand of death shall seize you, your boasted morality will wither, and afford you neither comfort nor safety. 'There is no other name given under heaven whereby ye can be saved' than the name of JESUS. Unless, therefore, you come to Him, renouncing dependence upon every other prop, and cast your guilty, polluted, naked, helpless, hell-deserving souls on His infinitely meritorious sacrifice, you cannot find the gate of heaven.

Antinomians. Ye who make void the law through faith, who profess to know Christ, but in works deny Him, who enjoy the pleasures of sloth on the couch of unbelief under pretence that God must do all without you, who, while in the mire of sin, are perhaps absurdly boasting that you cannot fall, who make yesterday's faith a reason for shunning the cross to-day,—we show *you* your transgression. You are attempting to put asunder what God hath joined together. *Your* faith can never save you. It as little resembles saving faith as a sun depicted upon paper resembles the sun that shines upon the evil and upon the good. As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. It is spurious, a mere speculation, an empty notion, that will neither enlighten the mind, purify the heart, nor save the soul. Good works are absolutely necessary, to show your obedience to God, and to prove that your faith is genuine; to evince your love and gratitude to Christ, and that your friends and neighbours may be induced to seek Him; that your faith may be nourished and strengthened,—for 'by works is faith made perfect.' We beseech you, then, no longer turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, nor make Christian liberty a cloak for maliciousness. 'Not every one,' says Christ, 'that saith unto Me, Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of My Father which is in heaven.'

Hypocrites. You who have taken upon yourselves the Christian name for some sinister end;—perhaps, to obtain acts of charity, or support in business; to retrieve a lost character, or acquire that honour which in

some cases is attached to the service of God; that your pride may be flattered, and your ambition gratified, by a display of your talents; if not that you may the more secretly indulge in some vices and passions, without being suspected by others;—O ye baptized infidels, washed to fouler stains! You have put on the garb of piety, as a cloak to conceal your deformity. You have stolen the livery of heaven, that in it you may serve the devil. At the sacred feast you sit among the saints, and with your guilty hands touch the holiest things. Though you are the brood of the old serpent, you would, like him, transform yourselves into angels of light. You know that your hearts are full of depravity; that no thoughts are too bad to find a place within; no deeds too abominable to be practised by you in secret; and that you are ever ready to take advantage of another's ignorance or necessity in buying or selling. But God shall expose you, ye whited walls, ye painted sepulchres! All things are naked and open before Him, with whom you have to do. Your attempt at secresy has been all delusion, folly, madness! Your thoughts have been heard in heaven. Your breath has ascended like thunder before the throne of God. His eye has been upon you. He has surrounded you. He has penetrated your souls, and developed your motives; has darted through that impenetrable veil with which you have hitherto deceived your fellow-creatures. Your odious deformity is perfectly known; known to Him who could this moment proclaim it upon the house-top, and who will one day expose it before assembled worlds, and make you stand in all your 'naked ugliness.'

Backsliders. Ye did run well; who hath hindered you? Ye once did say, 'Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul.' Where is now the blessedness ye spake of? The fine gold is become dim; the light that was in you is become darkness. You have lost your relish for the things of God. Secret prayer, serious meditation, and close examination are now neglected by you. Your delight is no longer with the excellent of the earth, and with such as excel in virtue. You can now associate with mere men of the world, if not with 'lewd fellows of the baser sort.' And is there any sin like unto this? Do not the inspired writers paint it in the blackest colours, and give it the most detestable epithets? Your guilt is in proportion to the light you have extinguished, the mercies you have abused, the obligations you have violated, and the blessings you have forfeited. And what are you now doing, but saying to your friends and neighbours, 'I have tried religion, and have found it unsatisfying? I commenced to be a follower of Christ, but I found the cost and labour to preponderate against the pleasures. I would therefore advise you to have nothing to do with the matter; it is all a delusion—I speak from experience.' Such

is the language, at least, of your conduct. And do you wish your friends not only to embrace, but to act upon, an idea like this? Will you be guilty not only of ingratitude against God, or trampling under foot the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, of doing despite to the Spirit of grace; but of giving such an occasion to the enemies to blaspheme? Will you throw such difficulties in the way of those who are ignorant and out of the way? Will you minister to the ruin of your relatives, and hasten your own damnation? For they 'who bear thorns and briers are rejected, and are nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.' But why should this be? It need not be. God is willing now to return unto you, if you return unto Him. Hear His language: 'How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within Me, My repentings are kindled together.'

Half-hearted Professors. And how common are these! I fear that many of you, who are *in* Zion, are there *at ease*. You feel little interested in her prosperity. You put not your shoulders to the work. You labour not to strengthen her stakes, and lengthen her cords. You ought, long ere this, to have been leaders of classes, visitors of the sick, distributors of tracts, teachers of babes, collectors for the missions. But,—no; you do just nothing. When you are called to duty, you can always find some excuse,—can see 'a lion in the way.' Your attendance on the means of grace is very occasional: a shower of rain, a slight bodily indisposition, the call of a friend about the time of public worship, will keep you from the house of God. Some of you are never seen there on a week evening; you almost think it beneath you to attend the prayer-meeting; you oft turn your faces from the table of the Lord; and as to your class, your leader has perhaps to mark you *twice* absent for *once* present. Hence your religious experience is low; you are ever complaining of your 'leanness.' And well you may; because, 'when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.' Your conduct also is not the most consistent. You are too frequently mere accommodators and time-servers. Like the chameleon, you catch the colour of the object presented to your view. Like the thermometer, you are governed by the atmosphere of the place in which you have your residence. You ebb and flow with circumstances, like the tides with the phases of the moon. You can take your 'comfortable glass,' your 'pipe,' your 'pinch,' with as much zest as those 'whose God is their belly, and who mind earthly things.' The line of demarcation between you and the world is nearly obliterated. In your attention to family worship, and to the government of your children

and servants, you are scarcely more excellent than your ungodly neighbours. In your dress you are not to be distinguished; for your adorning is that outward adorning of curling the hair, and the wearing of gold and costly apparel. These things ought not so to be. They are spots in our feasts of charity. Read Mr. Wesley's admirable sermons on these subjects. Such examples as those which you afford must teem with mischief; will endanger your own peace and safety, will be destructive of your usefulness, will stumble the weak, pain the pious, and be offensive to God. 'I would,' saith He, 'that you were cold or hot; but because you are lukewarm, I will spew you out of My mouth.' Then shake yourselves from the dust; stir up the gift of God that is within you; rouse your energies, awaken your desires, put forth your strength. If religion is anything, it is everything. You cannot have too much of it, nor be too diligent in the pursuit of it. Ask not, *how little* will do for you, and with what slender qualifications God will admit you into heaven, but *how much* it is your privilege to enjoy, and *how high* a station you may occupy around the throne of the Eternal.

In the several classes of sinners already addressed, there are no doubt individuals of every age and of every condition. There are, however, sins peculiar to the several stages and conditions of life, and these must not be passed over.

Young Sinners. We must show you *your* transgressions. Holy Job bitterly lamented his juvenile iniquities; and the Psalmist devoutly prayed, 'Remember not against me the sins of my youth!' You were shapen in iniquity, and in sin did your mothers conceive you; and that depravity, entailed upon you by your parents, has grown with your growth, and strengthened with your strength. You have not always spoken the words of truth. Pride has appeared in a thousand forms. When you ought to have been humble, you have been haughty; when gentle, you have been obstinate; when forgiving, revengeful. You have been proud of your persons and of your clothes. And what precious time you have trifled away, in reading novels and romances, in shuffling cards and throwing dice, in attending the dancing-room, the play-house, the race-ground! Disobedience to parents is another sin of which some of you have been guilty. You have pained the mind of that father, who has perhaps wrought many a day, exposed to the winter's blast and to the summer's heat, to provide you with food, and raiment, and education. You have wounded the heart of that mother, who has oft stilled your infant clamours at her breast; and you are now bringing down their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. And how have you robbed GOD! You say, 'It is time enough yet to serve Him.' You think sickness, death, and judgment far away; and that you shall live yet many years. But

boast not yourselves of to-morrow. Many as young as you are now mouldering in the dust. Think not of paying off the Best of Beings with a mere remnant of your time. 'Remember *now* thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.' And then, fearing Him from thy youth, serving Him in the midst of 'a crooked and perverse generation,' thou shalt appear as a lily among thorns, as a bright star in a dark night; and thy 'first fruits' shall be peculiarly acceptable to Him to whom thy more than all is due, and whose solemn declaration is, 'I love them that love Me; and those that seek Me early shall find Me.'

The Middle-aged. Some of you have changed 'youthful lusts' for lusts not less injurious to the soul. The cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and a thousand other things choke the good seed, so that it becomes unfruitful. You permitted your early days to pass away unimproved; but with the promise that you would attend to religion when you had grown up and were settled in life. And now you allege the multiplicity of your secular concerns as an excuse for neglecting it. 'There are,' says a father, 'the calls of a rising family.' 'My work in the house,' says a mother, 'is never done, so that I can seldom get to church or chapel.' 'My business,' says a master, 'requires all my care and attention.' 'And all my hours,' says a servant, 'are occupied about other matters; so that I have no time to attend to religion.' O, worse than madness! to sell thus your souls for your bodies, religion for sin, God for the devil, heaven for hell! But you know that what you say is not true; that you *have* time for these things, if you will only employ it. When you have a call to agreeable company, or to a favourite amusement, you can easily give up business for a while; but you can never do it for God or for your souls. How is it that your worldly or domestic concerns are always in danger, when He calls for your services; but that you see no difficulties when your companions call you, though you spend not only your time, but your substance with them? 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked.' You may find time to attend the 'tea-party,' or to hear the 'philosophical lecture;' you may remain nearly buried in your shops and counting-houses, with 'pounds, shillings, and pence,' from early on Monday morning till late on Saturday night; and yet grudge one hour for seeking 'the true riches.' You may amuse yourselves for a while with the trifles of earth. Your souls immortal may spend all their fires, waste their strength in strenuous idleness, be thrown into tumult, enraptured or alarmed; but what will it at last profit you, if you gain the whole world, and lose your own souls?

The Aged. Ye grey-headed sinners! I venerate your grey hairs.

Would to God, that I had no need to reprove you! But shall I suffer you to go down into the grave, and perish eternally, out of a false respect, and an improper delicacy? Nay, I will speak and spare not. What a heap of sins have you gathered together! Your childhood was spent in vanity, your youth in folly, your mature days in seeking 'what you should eat, what you should drink, and wherewithal you should be clothed;' while querulousness, impatience, discontent, suspicion, and covetousness are the sins which have characterised your old age. O that I could at last alarm your guilty fears. Your sins rise like mountains, and reach to heaven. Millions are forgotten by you, but they are before God. Your work is indeed great;—dark minds to be enlightened, hard hearts to be softened, stubborn wills to be subdued, unholy affections to be purified, old habits and prejudices to be overcome, numerous graces to be obtained and exercised. And you have but a short time in which to perform it. You have one foot lifted to step into the grave. O go to Him, though it be at the eleventh hour! It is *now or never*. Make haste, and delay not to keep His commandments.

The Poor. And are *you* all pious, and humble, and patient, and thankful, and diligent in seeking after durable riches and honours? Alas! you are murmurers and complainers, you take the name of your God in vain. You are discontented with your lot, and are impatient under sufferings; you hate the rich through envy, or you flatter them for gain. You think, because you suffer in this world, you shall escape suffering in the next. But be not deceived; if you live and die without the pardon of sin, and a change of heart, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

The Rich. But who will dare to say plain things to you? Your property, dignity, and appearance, all seem to forbid. The command, however, is, 'Charge them that are rich.' Allow us then to tell *you*, that your riches expose you to serious dangers. Are you not high-minded? Do you not think that there should be one way of salvation for you, and another for the lower orders of society? Do you not oppress the poor, and tyrannise over your inferiors? Do you not live in pleasure on the earth, and are wanton? Do you not, when consuming your wealth upon your lust, impiously say, 'I have a right to do what I will with my own'? No, ye rich, it is not your *own;* you are not proprietors, but stewards; and if you waste upon yourselves what God has given you for His cause and for the poor, you will have a tremendous account to give. 'Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.' Do not

then 'shut up your bowels of compassion,' but 'draw out your souls;' 'open your hands wide;' 'scatter abroad;' 'be enriched in everything to all bountifulness;' and so lay up in store a good foundation against the time to come, that you may lay hold on eternal life.

But time and strength fail. Who would undertake the task of showing the sins of mankind? nay, of one individual? How little have I said! how much remains to be told! O sinners, of every description, hear, fear, and turn to God! Your all is at stake. Your eternal destinies will soon be weighed and fixed. You must now turn or burn. Delay no longer. Procrastination is the thief of time, the kidnapper of hell, the destroyer of souls. Shortly you will get beyond the reach of warnings and admonitions and beyond every possibility of salvation. Do you say, we are severe? Woe unto us if we declare not the whole counsel of God. But the *love of Christ* constraineth us. 'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' He shed His precious blood for you. He now pleads your cause in heaven. He can save to the very uttermost. Though your sins be as scarlet, He can make them white as snow; though red like crimson, He can make them as wool. He now waits to be gracious. O then come to Him; come as you are, in your real, and not in any assumed character. Confess your manifold sins and wickedness; and, giving up every plea beside, unhesitatingly cast your souls upon His atoning sacrifice; and the guilt of your sin shall be cancelled, the power shall be broken, the bent to it shall be taken away, the pollution of it shall be cleansed; and, being made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness, your fruit shall be unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

SERMON IV.

SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR; OR, THE SEPARATE STATE.

'I SAW UNDER THE ALTAR THE SOULS OF THEM THAT WERE SLAIN FOR THE WORD OF GOD, AND FOR THE TESTIMONY WHICH THEY HELD: AND THEY CRIED WITH A LOUD VOICE, SAYING, HOW LONG, O LORD, HOLY AND TRUE, DOST THOU NOT JUDGE AND AVENGE OUR BLOOD ON THEM THAT DWELL ON THE EARTH? AND WHITE ROBES WERE GIVEN UNTO EVERY ONE OF THEM; AND IT WAS SAID UNTO THEM, THAT THEY SHOULD REST YET FOR A LITTLE SEASON, UNTIL THEIR FELLOW-SERVANTS ALSO AND THEIR BRETHREN, THAT SHOULD BE KILLED AS THEY WERE, SHOULD BE FULFILLED.'—*Rev.* vi. 9, 10, 11.

THE circumstances of John at the time that he penned these words were deeply interesting and affecting. He was above ninety years of age, and the last surviving apostle. Sixty years had elapsed since he stood on the heights of Calvary, as his divine Master expired amid the mockings of men, the malice of demons, and the convulsions of nature. During this period John had witnessed the triumphs of the cross over every form of ignorance and vice, superstition and idolatry. Wherever its banners had been unfurled, oracles were struck dumb, idols fell, temples were overthrown, devils were confounded, souls, by thousands, felt its power, and exulted under its hallowing influence. Pliny, who wrote only about seven years after the death of this apostle, and from Asia Minor, the scene of his labours, states, in a letter to the Emperor Trajan, that 'great numbers were Christians, of all ages, ranks, and sexes; that they were found not only in the cities, but in the smaller towns and open country; that the temples of the gods were almost forsaken, and few victims were purchased for sacrifice.'

But these victories had not been cheaply won. At every step the Gospel had met with the most formidable opposition. John himself, at the commencement of his ministry, had been unjustly imprisoned, and ignominiously scourged. He had witnessed the violent storm of persecution under which Stephen fell. He had been deprived of his beloved brother James, by the sword of Herod. He had seen the infant Church

driven, by ungoverned fury, out of Jerusalem, and had survived the destruction of that guilty city. All the other apostles had, ere this, been removed by martyrdom from the scene of their labours, and John was banished to Patmos, a small desolate island in the Ægean Sea. Most of the persecutors of the first Christians had been summoned from earth, had passed disembodied to the flaming throne of Jehovah, had heard their decisive sentence, and gone to their own place. Pilate was dead; Caiaphas was dead; Herod was dead; Caligula was dead; Nero was dead; Domitian was dead. But, for the support and consolation of the apostle, and for the encouragement of the persecuted followers of Christ in all ages, John is favoured with a vision of those who had suffered in the cause of the Redeemer, not counting their lives dear unto them. 'I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.' To these meek followers of the Lamb, we now direct your serious attention. Let us consider

The Death they had endured, and the State on which they had entered.

I. THE DEATH THEY HAD ENDURED. Death itself is an evil, the effect of sin, the consequence of the fall; and under whatever circumstances it takes place it is deeply affecting,—whether you die at home or abroad; by land or by sea; surrounded by weeping friends, or in solitude; quietly on your own bed, or unexpectedly on the public way; by a wasting consumption, or sudden stroke of paralysis; whether in a state of perfect consciousness, or of total insensibility. We speak not of the troop of diseases, the wearisome nights, the agonising pains, the dimness of eyes, and the trembling of joints, which frequently, as fearful harbingers, proclaim and prepare for the approach of the king of terrors. But as death prostrates human strength and beauty, demolishes your tabernacle, dissolves nature, reduces one part of you to a mass of corruption, a heap of dust: cuts asunder whom love had knit, and sympathy made one; separates parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives; breaks off all your purposes, and removes you from all worldly enjoyments, terminates your opportunities of usefulness, and days of grace and probation; *whenever*, *wherever*, or *however* it may arrive, you will find it a solemn thing to die. You have perhaps stood by the bedside of a dying friend, and seen the heart-strings rending, the lungs ceasing to breathe, the eye to sparkle, and the tongue to converse;—you have then seen a little of death; but it has been but a little; through the valley none of you have passed, and of it I can give you no adequate description.

But the death which those whom John saw had endured was *Violent*. It was unnatural, unjust, cruel, painful, agonising. They were 'slain,' slaughtered, sacrificed for 'the Word of God.' Christ had told them before His departure from earth, that they should be hated of all men for His name's sake. That they should be put out of the synagogues, and that whosoever killed them would think that they did God service. That the brother should deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and that the children should rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. All this was very soon verified. The Christians were subjected to the severest hardships and sufferings, and were called to lay down their lives for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. Jews and Gentiles combined against them. Kings forgot the dignity of their character, philosophers their boasted moderation, relations all the ties of consanguinity, and men all their feelings of humanity. If the seasons proved cold, or the vineyards fiand elds were unproductive; if fire consumed any of their cities, or earthquakes desolated the provinces, the Christians were instantly accused, for the purpose of instituting against them a ferocious persecution. They were deprived of their property, transported to deserts, doomed to labour in the mines, suffocated in the stench of dungeons, drowned in the sea, thrown to the wild beasts, suffered the application of burning oils, were placed on plates of hot iron, roasted before slow fires, arrows were driven into their bodies, and their flesh torn off by instruments made for the horrible purpose. They were beheaded, they were stoned, they were nailed to the cross, they were tied to the stake, the smoke of which ascended in thick volumes to the skies. The capricious, the cowardly, the cruel Nero, that master-spirit of persecution, had the Christians sewn up in skins of wild beasts, and then exposed to the fury of dogs; he had them rolled in garments saturated with pitch, and set up as lamps to illuminate his gardens; others he employed to draw his chariot, while he would sit and torture them. Human and infernal barbarity exhausted its ingenuity in devising means for the infliction of suffering and of death. But we dwell no longer on the tragic circumstances of their death. We consider their martyrdom

As a powerful attestation to the truth of the Gospel.

'They were slain for the word of God,'—for their faith in the Gospel, and the profession which they courageously made. It was not a natural hardihood of mind, a stoical apathy, a philosophic pride, or a spirit of fanaticism, that enabled them to bear such horrid tortures, but a firm conviction of the truth of Christianity. With the facts on which that truth was founded, the apostles, and many of the first Christians, were acquainted. They had known the Lord; listened to the gracious

words that proceeded out of His mouth; witnessed His stupendous miracles; they saw His spotless life and unprecedented death. He showed Himself alive to them after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining unto the kingdom of God. They beheld Him taken up into heaven, and ten days afterwards received the gift of the Holy Ghost, as He had promised. And then in His name, through faith in His name, they were able to perform various miracles. These were matters concerning which it was not possible for their senses to be imposed upon; and facts, the certainty of which they must have known. And all these Christians had had the evidence of their personal experience, that Christ was exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sin. As therefore in these matters it was not possible for them to be deceived, and as they could have no inducement to deceive others, their profession which exposed them to such reproach, and suffering, and death, must have arisen from an untrembling conviction of the truth of the Gospel. But we view their death as affording

A beautiful exemplification of the spirit of their religion.

It enabled them calmly, patiently, and perseveringly to bear all the privations and tortures to which their profession exposed them. However numerous, complicated, keen, or heavy their sufferings, they found that 'Grace was sufficient for them.' Their enemies desperately resolved either to affright or to crush them. They selected the most delicate females as the fittest subjects, as they thought, on whom to make their infernal experiments, but after trying a thousand, and a thousand times, they utterly failed. They found that no danger could alarm, that no opposition could quell, that no ridicule could abash the spirit of these saints. The derision of the scorner, and the fury of the persecutor, were alike powerless before it. Through Christ strengthening them, they were incapable of fear, and insensible of weakness. They might fall, but they could not fly. They might suffer, but they could not yield. Their bones might be broken, their blood poured out, their names traduced, and their freedom crushed; but their honour could not be trampled in dust, their innocence could not be tainted, the imperishable principle within them could not be impaired. 'This, like electric fire, acquired force by resistance, and intensity by repression—borrowing increase of splendour from surrounding gloom. The planets might have grown weary in their orbits;—the lamps of heaven gone out in utter darkness; but this living flame could never languish,—this ethereal spirit could never expire.' One of them exclaimed as he lay extended on the burning pile, 'I feel as if I were stretched on a bed of roses.' And another martyr of later days, Bishop Ferrar, who was born in Halifax parish,

said when going to the stake in the time of popish, persecuting Mary, 'If you see me once stir through the pains of my burning, then give no credit to the doctrine I have taught.' And yet, observe, that amidst all this firmness, this steadiness with which they walked up to the stake, there was no proud feeling, no unholy boasting, nothing of the maddening bravado of an earthly warrior; much less did they indulge any revengeful feeling towards their bitter enemies. No imprecations fell from their lips, no malice burned in their hearts. Though persecuted without a cause, loaded with foul imputations which they did not deserve, deprived of life unjustly, and instead of being pitied under their sufferings, they were insulted. Such were wrongs too irritating for human nature of itself to endure. But, by the grace which God supplied, these Christians were enabled to bless them that cursed them, and to pray for them that despitefully used and persecuted them. They were calm amidst the fury of their enemies; they breathed the purest benevolence, while their adversaries breathed revenge and blood; they cherished in the same bosom the most invincible courage, and the tenderest affections; they encountered dangers with more than the firmness of philosophers, and yet melted away with compassion towards their persecutors, saying, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge! This spirit was so unearthly, so very different to everything that occupied the breasts of the adversaries, that it often excited their astonishment and admiration. We marvel not, that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. That their death often preached more successfully than their life; that many who considered the one, madness, retired from the scene of the other, exclaiming, 'How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!'

'Say, noble martyr, when thy breath
Was struggling with the grasp of death,
When every tortured nerve was rending,
And death with life
In bitter strife
And agony, contending,
Wert thou not borne in soul away,
Far from the weak consuming clay?
And o'er thy calm, unruffled soul
Did not celestial visions roll?
The martyr's stake is strewn with flowers,
And earthly and infernal powers
May try their little force in vain
To plant a thorn, or cause a pain!'

We may now view their martyrdom
As an evidence of their love to Christ. They had discovered that they

were not their own, for they were bought with a price. They had yielded to the claims of the Redeemer, and placed themselves entirely at His disposal. To Him they felt an inviolable attachment. With a sense of obligation to spread abroad His fame, and to suffer for His name's sake, they were deeply impressed. They saw that it was impossible for them to be neutral. That if they were not for Christ, they were against Him. And the question to be decided was, whether His cause, or the cause of Satan should prevail in the world. The heathens said to them again and again, We have no wish to injure you, your life shall be spared, if you will only go into one of our temples and offer a little incense upon the altar. Did these Christians comply? Did they say, there cannot be much harm in casting a few grains of incense to an idol, if we do not bow to it in our heart, and especially as such a trifling act will save our life? No: they knew that an idol was nothing in the world, and that to present any sacrifice to it was to insult their rightful Lord, to compromise their profession, to renounce their religion, and place an obstacle in the way of the Gospel, to encourage idolatry, to defile their consciences, and to ruin their souls. They therefore resolutely refused. They would rather die than commit sin. When the venerable Polycarp was called upon to revile the blessed Saviour, or to go to the stake, he nobly replied: "Sixty and eight years have I served Him, and He has never forsaken me; how then shall I revile my Lord!' But they were not only willing to suffer for Christ; they considered it a high honour. They longed to have fellowship with Him in His sufferings. They counted all things but loss, so that they might win Him. They were willing not only to be bound, but to die for the Lord Jesus. When Ignatius, another disciple of our apostle, was about to be exposed to the wild beasts, he said, 'Let them rush upon me, for I long to be united to Jesus.' We now consider their martyrdom

As a proof of their faith in a better world. The testimony of God gave them a positive assurance of the existence of that world. Their faith penetrated its invisibilities. Scenes the most lovely and majestic rose in distant but luminous perspective to its gaze. It caused a new, a brighter, and a more blissful world to rise above the damps, and shadows, and pollutions of this; in comparison with which everything earthly sunk into utter insignificancy. Their hearts beat with a holy ardour as they saw the starry crown glittering through the sky; and kindled into rapture at the thought of wearing it. They had indeed the same feelings as other men; and they could not but naturally fear death; but there was a principle more absorbing than fear: an indemnity that made the terrible loss, gain: a counteraction that turned the dreadful evil into good. Hence they groaned earnestly, and were

willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Though death approached them in such appalling forms, they knew that however painful the rending struggle of the mortal strife, the same step that took them from earth would appropriate heaven; that when mortals would say, 'a man is dead,' angels would sing, 'a child is born.' This will lead us to consider

II. THE STATE ON WHICH THEY HAD ENTERED. And we observe that it was

A State of Consciousness.

'The dead are like the stars by day—
Withdrawn from mortal eye;
But not extinct; they hold their way
Of glory through the sky.
Spirits from bondage thus set free
Vanish amidst immensity;
Where human thought, like human sight,
Fails to pursue their lofty flight.'

'But I saw,' says John, 'the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God. And they cried with a loud voice.' Death had not annihilated them. It had neither extinguished their being, nor terminated their existence. Their bodies had been slaughtered; but their souls, secure in their existence, had smiled at the drawn dagger, and defied its point. No wounds could injure them, and no violence destroy them. The soul and death are the very antipodes of each other, hence they can never approximate towards each other, hence they can never meet, hence death can never effect the soul's destruction. The spirit is immaterial, and therefore indivisible, indissoluble, and indestructible; except, by the power of Him who created it. The soul existed, and possessed understanding, will, and memory, before it was breathed into the body. It is perfectly distinct from the body, and is not dependent upon the body for any of its faculties. The dissolution therefore of the body has no more tendency to destroy the soul than the taking out the wires of a cage has to destroy the bird enclosed in it. The sword, the rack, the fire may destroy the material part of man, but :—

'Lo! the heavenly spirit towers,
Like flame, o'er nature's funeral pyre,
Triumphs in immortal powers,
And claps his wings of fire.'

The materialist, then, who says that death causes the entire destruction of man's thinking property, is in egregious error. And so also are those who think that death totally incapacitates the soul for the exercise of its powers; which suspension they call the 'sleep of the soul,' from

death to the morning of the resurrection. But is not thought as essential to mind, as figure is to matter? And if so, would not a real suspension of thought be the destruction of the mind? As the soul is perfectly distinct from the body, it will survive it, and subsist without it, not only retaining its vital existence, but its consciousness, reflection, and activity. That this is possible we think plain from the fact that God exists, who is a purely spiritual Being. And angels exist; and who dares assert that they are material beings, or, that they are in the least dependent for their thoughts on any organization of matter? But the Bible throws a flood of light on this highly interesting subject.

The Lord said to Moses, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;' holy men who had been dead many years; but Christ said, when quoting these words, 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' Solomon says, that at death the spirit of a man goeth upwards;—and returns unto God who gave it. Christ said to His disciples, 'Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul:' thus shewing that the power of persecutors was limited, that their instruments of torture could not reach the soul; but if by the death of the body, the soul were deprived of perception, activity, and enjoyment, it would be as truly 'killed' as the body, even should all its powers be restored at the last day. Again, Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration long after their departure from this world. 'Lazarus died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom.' Christ said to the penitent thief, 'To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.' And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord Jesus, and saying, 'receive my spirit.' Paul said that he had been caught up into paradise, and there heard unspeakable words, and that he had 'a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.' And all these passages are confirmed by our text. John, to whom a 'door was opened in heaven,' saw the souls of those who had been slain. They were 'under the altar,' which intimates that they had been sacrificed for the truth, and that their constancy unto death was well pleasing to their Lord.

Paradise is not only a state, but a place. Where it is situated, we cannot tell:—how near to, or how distant from our earth. But whatever be its distance, we think the happy spirit on quitting the body will reach it in the shortest period of time. It will be no sooner absent from the body, than it will be present with the Lord. So that wherever the locality of the intermediate state may be, from it Christ will be visible, and with Him departed spirits shall hold intimate communion. It may be difficult to say, how the soul when enfranchised by the body's death, will hold correspondence with external objects; whether immediately, or by some vehicle provided to supply the place of senses; but we have no

doubt but that its powers will then be greatly strengthened; its knowledge will be inconceivably clearer, and more extensive; memory will more easily call up the past, and hope anticipate the future. But we must observe that the state on which these Christians had entered was,

A State of Holiness. There were given unto every one of them 'white robes;'—the emblems of purity. Not that you are to suppose that their moral stains had been removed by any purgatorial fires. Sin has produced suffering, and therefore suffering cannot destroy sin, for no effect can destroy its own cause. But were it even possible for penal sufferings to effect a moral purgation, we have no evidence, as Dr. A. Clarke justly observes, of any such place as purgatory. It is a mere fable, either collected from spurious and apocryphal writings, canonized by superstition and ignorance; or it is the offspring of pious visionaries, early converts from heathenism, from which they imported this part of their creed. There is not one text of Scripture that gives the least countenance to a doctrine as dangerous to the souls of men as it has been gainful to its inventors.

We may also remark that the 'white robes' of these martyrs had not been washed in their own blood. Their righteous souls would have abhorred the idea that there was anything meritorious in their severest sufferings. No: *they washed their robes in the blood of yonder Lamb. They felt and loathed their depravity while on earth, by faith they came to the fountain open for sin and uncleanness, and there found redemption, and had their defilement removed.* But while here their graces were immature, and their infirmities numerous. The persons around them were polluted, the place was polluted, the very atmosphere they breathed was polluted, and as they were then on trial, they were in danger of being contaminated. But they are now as incapable of sinning, as of suffering. They have entered a region where there is nothing that defileth:—the asylum for pure spirits. No one there smites upon his breast, and says, God be merciful to me a sinner. No one retires into secret and weeps bitterly. No one exclaims, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death. No one feels shame or grief on account of barrenness of spirit, and hardness of heart. They have neither spot nor wrinkle nor any such thing, but are holy and without blemish. There is not even the presence of sin. And holiness, which here was in its first dawn, like the morning twilight, dim and obscure, now shines refulgent as the sun. There is in them no principle or affection contrary to love to God. They love what God loves, and hate what He hates. Hence, in their supplication, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?' there is nothing vindictive, no feeling of revenge, or any impure affection. It was a holy desire, and agreeable with the will of

God. They were concerned for the honour of their Master, and the success of His truth. They refer to His sovereignty, 'O Lord,'—the supreme Ruler. To His holiness and faithfulness, 'holy and true:'—when will it please Thee to bind Satan that he may no more deceive the nations, and to break the power of bloody persecutors, that Thy gospel may have free course and be glorified? Hence, in the nineteenth chapter, when the enemies of the cross are punished, the cry of these souls is turned into a song of praise: 'Alleluia! Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are His judgments: for He hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia.' They thus shout the justice, as well as the mercy of God: sing the song of Moses, who overthrew Pharaoh and his host, and of the Lamb, who redeemed them by His own blood. We next observe, that they had entered into

A State of Happiness. It was said unto them that they should 'rest.' They there 'rest' as weary travellers rest when they have finished their journey, and find themselves at home. 'Rest' as soldiers rest when the battle is fought, and they feel themselves in a state of security and peace. 'Rest' as mariners rest after having escaped the perils of the ocean, and anchored in the calm and secure haven. What comfortable words! Christ says to His persecuted followers, you have had a hard time of it, a severe struggle, through blood you have the entrance gained; come, 'rest a little.' You have long had to wander about in sheepskins an goatskins, in dens and mountains, and in caves of the earth;—'rest a little.' You have had to be in 'fasts oft,' but hunger now and thirst no more. You have had to contend with principalities and powers, but you are now out of the reach of all their fiery darts. You have been afflicted and tormented; but here the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. Thus, the moment they enter that state, they are free, entirely and eternally free, from all the afflictions, temptations, and persecutions, to which, while here, they were exposed. But they are rewarded with something more than a mere continuation of being, from which is excluded all sorrow, and pain, and want a mere negative happiness. They are in Paradise,—a state and a place of actual, rich enjoyment. They are 'present with the Lord;' and in His presence there is fulness of joy. They have more complete and sensible communion now that they are delivered from the burden of the flesh. The influence of the Holy Spirit is more powerful and rapturous than they were capable of receiving while in these scenes of mortality. It appears from the text that they know what is passing on earth; and that they take a deep interest in the militant embodied host. They also may minister to the heirs of salvation.

And as there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, so the saints in the intermediate state may have their bliss augmented by every fresh accession to the blood-besprinkled bands. But we remark farther, that these Christians had entered into

A Temporary State. They were to rest for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. There were others who would have to bear a like honourable testimony to the cause, and they were to wait until their brother martyrs should come to them. Whether this refers to any additional honour or happiness which they were to receive at any period before the end of the world, we know not; but it is certain that their present state is to be succeeded by a higher and a happier one. But *a half* of them is happy now. Their souls are in Paradise, their bodies in this world. The spirit cannot be perfectly happy without her partner. Both have been bought with a price; and the souls under the altar are now waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. They may say, if the Spirit of Him who raised up Christ from the dead dwell in us, He who raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies—raise them up bright and beautiful, vigorous and active, incorruptible and immortal, like unto Christ's glorious body. And O! with what astonishment and delight will these souls, after long being absent, return and re-enter such bodies. What, the spirit may say, is this my body that I found such a suitable organ and instrument while on earth? That was bruised, broken, burned, and from which I was violently driven? It is mine, and now we meet, never to sunder more. Then shall they mount up to meet their Lord. From Him they shall receive a public acquittal, and hear the plaudit, Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord. The present improvement of their souls will then be vastly exceeded; their present happiness immeasurably augmented. Every vacuum will now be filled, every want supplied, every desire gratified. The body will assist rather than hinder the soul in the search of truth, and yield exquisite pleasure, instead of producing pain. The employment will be suited to the loftiness of their glorified powers, and the society wise, holy and happy. But they shall see the King in His beauty, stand amid the irradiations of His throne, celebrate in loftiest anthems His praises, and dwell in His embraces through a blissful eternity.

Sufficient, I trust, has been said to convince you that the Christian is the highest style of man. He meets death with composure, he is happy in the intermediate state, he will have boldness in the day of judgment, and be blissful throughout eternity. But different, widely different will

be the condition of all those who refuse to hearken to Christ as their Teacher, believe in Him as their Saviour, follow Him as their Pattern, and submit to Him as their King.

In Death. No riches can bribe, no flatteries soothe, no power oppose, and no eloquence persuade this inexorable foe. He will remove you, sinners, from all your pleasures; will draw aside the curtain, and let in on your soul the searching light of eternity. You may live fools, but fools you will not die. Memory will then prove terribly tenacious, and open her secret stores. Your sins will be brought to your remembrance, with all the aggravating circumstances which have rendered them heinous. Whether you look backward or forward, upward or downward, nothing will be presented but what will fill you with horror and dismay. You may shriek for help, but shriek in vain. You must die, and dying without pardon and holiness, you go out of the world in a state of destitution, a thousand times more affecting than that in which you were born. And what will be your condition

In the Separate State? You will go, not into Paradise, but into Tartarus,—a frightful prison. Stripped of the flesh, you will there stand naked before an offended God. You will be in a land of darkness and the shadow of death. A land of wretchedness and obscurity, where sempiternal horror dwells. A murky land, where death rules, over which he projects his shadow, intercepting every ray, but such as makes darkness visible. You will there have evil substantially and awfully present. Reflection on the past will dreadfully augment your condition. Conscience will woefully torment you. The ceaseless tempest of unholy passions, and the terrible suspense as to what awaits you, will tremendously increase your misery.

In the Day of Judgment? The apostle tells us in the following verses, that then you will be filled with surprise and terror, shame and confusion, and despair. With bitter moans, and piercing cries, and dreadful shrieks, you will say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

And while the saints through eternity will be enjoying a blissful rest, You—*in Hell*, will have 'no rest day nor night,' and the smoke of your torment will ascend up for ever and ever. But this need not be your portion. You are under no necessity of going into that place of torment. A Saviour has been provided. Christ has tasted death for you. He is interceding in heaven for you. He is waiting to receive you. Fly, sinners, fly, into those arms of everlasting rest.

And does not the conduct of these first Christians reprove lukewarm

professors of the present day? They kept as far as possible from the principles, maxims, fashions and practices of the world, you try how near you can come to it without endangering your salvation. They enquired how much religion they might enjoy, you are anxious to know how little will suffice. They considered it a high honour to stand 'faithful among the faithless,' to maintain the great principles of truth and righteousness in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, holding fast the helm, while others were riven away by the tempest, not counting their lives dear unto them. You are terrified at the world's grim laugh, the curling lip of ridicule,—are never called to duty but you see a lion in the way, carefully shun every cross, and would sell your very birthright for a mess of pottage. May God show you your danger, rouse you from your apathy, inspire you with courage, and may you never more be slothful, but followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises!

Ye valiant soldiers of the cross, catch the mantle of the Elijahs who are now so rapidly ascending from the scene of their labours; take up the torch of truth which they have dropped, and actively carry it forward to illuminate and to bless the world. A great battle has yet to be fought between light and darkness, truth and error, holiness and sin, heaven and hell. The enemies of the cross are numerous, powerful, active, and malignant. They shall make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb shall overcome them, for He has upon His vesture and upon His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Fight under His banner, be obedient to His commands, depend on His strength, breathe no longer than you breathe your souls in prayer and praise to Him, and you shall soon join the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven.

SERMON V.

ANGELS INSTRUCTED BY THE CHURCH.*

'To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.'—*Ephesians* iii. 10.

'O Lord, how manifold are Thy works: In wisdom hast Thou made them all.' Such was the rapturous exclamation of the Psalmist, and such will be the acknowledgment of all who attentively and devoutly contemplate the works of God. The heavens, sun, moon, and stars, in their light and influence, their magnitudes, revolutions and distances, their relations, connections, arrangements, and dependencies, strikingly display the glory of His wisdom. So does this earth—its different strata, various elements, diversified scenery of hill and dale, sea and sky; its various productions—grain, shrubs, trees, fruits, flowers. See it also displayed in the various tribes of animals—the beasts, birds, fishes, reptiles, insects; in their shapes and sizes, motions and instincts, internal and external organization, weapons for attack and defence, you will discover a marvellous adaptation to the element in which they live, the food they eat, the dangers to which they are exposed, the purposes they are intended to answer. More striking still is that wisdom displayed in man—with a body fearfully and wonderfully constructed, with a soul still more wonderful. How close their connections! how mutual their sympathy! How admirably adapted is the soul, by its various faculties and affections, to be the director of the body! How equally suited is the body, by its various members and senses, to be the instrument of the soul, the minutest parts being capable of receiving impressions, conveying information, and yielding pleasure!

The wisdom of God is also seen in providence—in that regular chain by which causes and effects are linked together in God's government of individuals, families, churches, nations, the earth, the universe; and especially in so controlling events apparently disconnected, discordant,

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conflicting, mere casualties, to illustrate His own perfections, to facilitate His movements, to accomplish His benevolent purposes. But these are not the books to which Paul refers in the text; for with Creation and Providence, principalities and powers must be better acquainted than we are. But there is a volume for which those lofty spirits are indebted unto us—the volume of redemption—and to it Paul refers in our text. *The subject of study*, and the *character of the students* are the two particulars to which we invite your attention.

I. THE SUBJECT OF STUDY is, the wisdom of God as displayed in the redemption of a world of rebels, creatures who had yielded to the seduction of the great apostate spirit, attacked the throne of the Eternal, disturbed the tranquillity of His government, insulted His majesty, and thereby forfeited His favour, lost His image, exposed themselves to His displeasure, and to the everlasting abandonment of His presence and the glory of His power. Now, redemption was not intended to call God's attention to the human race; it was not intended to produce the love of His heart toward them; it was not intended to make God generous. It was impossible that a Being whose nature and whose name is Love should not feel compassion for His own offspring involved in ruin: there was never any difficulty in God's loving mankind. The difficulty lay here—how love could be shown them consistently with the other attributes of the Godhead; how He could be a just God and yet a Saviour; how He could show mercy to such a set of rebels against His majesty consistently with justice; how He could pardon sin, and yet at the same time discourage the commission of it; how such wanderers could be recovered; how such sinners could be saved. This was the knot which neither the wit of men nor the wisdom of angels could solve. God, in His infinite wisdom, undertook its solution, and He has displayed His wisdom. Of course, all the other perfections of the Godhead were vindicated and displayed in our redemption.

Our attention, however, is confined this morning to the display of infinite wisdom in the redemption of the human race. And this will appear, first, when you consider the *person of our Redeemer*. It was necessary that He should be divine; that He should bring infinite merit to atone for our infinite demerit; infinite strength to bear the infinite load; to overcome the enemies, numerous, powerful, subtle, and malignant, by whom we had been seduced. But death was the penalty of sin, and *without* shedding of blood there could be no redemption. Deity had no blood to shed. Deity was incapable of suffering, for the very idea that we must ever entertain of Jehovah is a Being of perfect, absolute perfections, and hence perfect in blessedness as in every other excellency

which is utterly inconsistent with any measure of pain or suffering. It therefore became necessary, if we were to be redeemed, that our Redeemer should be also human; for it is of the very essence of penal suffering that there be an adaptation of the punishment to the sensibility of the nature of the transgressor.

Now, observe, it was human nature that had sinned; it was on human nature only that justice had a claim; it was for human nature alone that justice could receive the satisfaction. Two natures were therefore required in our Redeemer. There was no such being in the universe. What was to be done in the exigency? God, in His infinite wisdom constituted a new person. He sent forth His Son made of a woman. That Christ was divine is evident from the titles given to him, the divine perfections ascribed to Him, the divine works performed by Him, the divine adoration rendered unto Him; we find it resting on a basis, broad and immovable, which all the devils in hell and all the sinners on earth can neither undermine nor overthrow. That He was also human, really a man—the heart of a man, the feelings of a man, the finer sensibilities of a man, all the properties of a man—is equally certain. Object not that this is all mystery. We acknowledge its mystery; we glory in the mystery; it is a mystery of the richest comfort. If there were no mystery in the person of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, there would be wanting an evidence that He was the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world. 'Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness—God manifest in the flesh.'

Now, the constitution of His person is unparalleled. There never was one like Him from eternity; there never will be another being so constituted throughout eternity. He stands out perfectly unique; He unites in Himself the most dissimilar conditions of existence—all that is lofty and glorious in the adorable Godhead, all that is lovely, attractive, and endearing in the manhood—both united in Him without being confounded. There is no transubstantiation in the matter; there is no intermixture of substance here. Deity was not humanized by its connection with humanity; humanity was not deified by its connection with Deity Divinity lost none of its perfections in consequence of its assumption of our nature; humanity lost none of its properties by its being connected with Divinity. The both natures remain perfectly distinct, and yet they are inseparably joined in the one person—the perfection of beauty, the model of purity, the source of felicity, Christ Jesus our Redeemer.

2. Second, observe the wisdom of God as displayed in the work of redemption. Redemption was not a casualty; it was not an afterthought in the mind of Jehovah; it was not a supplemental arrangement to meet an emergency that had sprung up unexpectedly: the whole was devised

in the council of heaven ere stars began to sparkle; and so clearly did God, whose understanding is infinite, perceive all the sufferings that Jesus Christ would have to endure for the accomplishment of our redemption, that, hundreds and thousands of years before the incarnation, He had types of those sufferings struck off, and He inspired prophets to portray them. And now see the wisdom of God in bringing about events so admirable as to fit in and fill up those types, and accomplish all the ancient predictions, and that by free agents, and that without those free agents knowing at the time that they were accomplishing the great purposes of heaven!

We dwell not on the sufferings of the Redeemer this morning; but whether you consider by whom He was betrayed, the price at which He was sold, the mock trial to which He was subjected, the time, during the passover, when tens of thousands of persons were gathered together at the spot; the place—Jerusalem—where for centuries sacrifices had been offered to prefigure the necessity and the efficacy of His death; the manner of the crucifixion; the marvellous circumstances that attended His execution—the darkening of the sun at noonday, the trembling earth, the rending of the veil of the temple, the opening graves, the bursting rocks around the hill—all point out to you and clearly show the display of infinite wisdom; but especially when you remember that that shameful, cruel, painful, lingering death accomplished objects the most difficult, the most painful, the most sublime, the most heavenly, the most Godlike; that the death of the Son of God should have been the means of bringing life to the world; that, by being made a curse, He should have redeemed us from the curse of the law, and that His precious blood should have re-adjusted all the jarring claims in the divine administration; that our redemption should be accomplished, not by a mere act of sovereignty, not by a mere stroke of omnipotence, not by the instructive teachings of the Saviour, not by the stupendous miracles which He wrought, nor by the spotless life which He lived, but by His precious blood; that the blood should have been the price, that the blood of Jesus Christ should have been the consideration on account of which the God who made you can have mercy upon you consistently with all His other attributes; that the blood of Jesus Christ should have cut the channel broad and deep for the salvation of God to flow down unto guilty man; that it should have removed all the barriers otherwise insurmountable in the way of the egress of salvation, and opened a passage for its full flow; that here, at Calvary, justice should have been satisfied, the sins you had committed atoned for the law that you had violated upheld and made honourable, the enemies by whom you had been seduced defeated, the blessings that you had forfeited again be recovered; that mercy and truth, in the death of Jesus

Christ, should have been brought together, righteousness and peace have entered into fellowship, and all this should have been accomplished—we do not dwell at any length upon the great work of the atonement this morning by the shedding of the blood of the Son of God, without any right conceded, without any demand rescinded, without any rule of equity invaded, without any truth abandoned, without any attribute of the Godhead obscured—that here all should have been upheld, vindicated, illustrated, displayed, and the discordant notes blended into a chorus more melodious than the fancied music of the spheres!

See you not the wisdom of God in the way in which He caught the wise in their own craftiness? How He turned the counsel of men into foolishness! How, the very moment when the hosts of hell were about to set up a shout of triumph, as He hung upon the cross, He wrested victory from them and held those devils up to the derision of the whole universe; at the very moment that they had brought Him to execution He made a show of their principalities and powers, openly triumphing over them on the cross. Jesus Christ at that moment inverted the whole machinery of hell, rolled it back upon the infernals, threw the whole host into utter confusion, and sent them back confounded and defeated, all but annihilated, to their own dark cell. Oh! how wonderful that He should have thus stooped to conquer! how wonderful that, by dying, He should have destroyed death and limited the power of death—that is, the devil!

He could not get at death but by dying; He could not crush the monster unless He had come fairly down to him; he could not have extracted his sting otherwise than by destroying his power by dying; He destroyed the destroyer; He went down into the territories of the grave to proclaim His mediatorial authority, to issue the proclamation to the slumbering millions in their tombs, 'Come forth!' and then, as He had declared, on the morning of the third day He rose from the cold sepulchre, threw off His graveclothes, burst the seal, opened the door, shook the earth, terrified the soldiers, and came forth with dyed garments from Edom, the earth, from Bozrah, its capital, where He had lain for three days in state, travelling in the greatness of His strength, glorious in His apparel, mighty to save; and then, when He had finished His work on earth, ascended, in placid majesty, amid the acclamations of the celestial hierarchy, through the gates of yonder city, walked its golden pavement, stepped on its loftiest throne, and seized the sceptre of universal dominion, while every eye in heaven turned up toward Him, every heart in heaven glowed with love unto Him, every tongue in heaven shouted His praise, and every crown in heaven was cast at the feet of Him who died and revived and ever liveth to make intercession for us.

3. See the wisdom of God displayed in the *benefits* of redemption. Our time will not allow us to attempt an enumeration of the benefits of redemption. We call your attention to these facts, how the wisdom of God is displayed therein—that from that supernatural darkness around yonder hill should have beamed forth a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of His people Israel. How wonderful that God should have laid amidst the earthquakes of Calvary the foundation on which we may all build our hope of everlasting happiness! How wonderful that that precious blood trickling from His brow, and back, and hands, and feet, and side should have formed the pool in which millions unnumbered have washed and been sanctified and glorified; that that blood which they drew from my Saviour should have become the price of a sinner's redemption through the blissful ages of eternity! As if God had said: 'They have killed my well-beloved Son; slaughtered the Lamb at Calvary: now I will never pardon a sinner until that sinner comes to Calvary; I will make the human race ascend its tragic heights, get within the hallowed shade of the cross, renounce dependence on every other foundation,'

> 'Give up every plea beside,
> Lord, I am lost, but Christ hath died.'

God has determined that He will pardon no man who rejects the atonement by our Lord Jesus Christ; God has determined that all men shall come to Calvary, shall bow at the foot of the cross, shall repose on the infinitely meritorious sacrifice. Oh! how wonderful that that Golgotha, that place of skulls, that horrid, hideous, loathsome spot, covered with bleached bones and saturated with blood, should be transformed, by the wisdom of God, into the most attractive spot in the whole universe! More eyes turn to Calvary than to any other place in our world; more songs are poured forth, from day to day, about Calvary than about any other spot. Calvary shall never be forgotten; Calvary shall have a place in the memories, the affections, and the anthems of the redeemed through a blissful eternity. Oh! the wisdom of God seen in all this! Whether you look at our absolute need of those blessings of redemption, or their value, the price beyond all price paid for them, their admirable adaptation to our character and circumstances, the universality of their offer, the simplicity of the conditions on which our interest in them is suspended, the mode of their communication, the beautiful variety, including the peace that passeth understanding, a hope that blooms with immortality, a joy unspeakable and full of glory, restoration to the favour and image of God which we had forfeited by sin; fallen by unbelief, raised again by faith; fallen through pride, exalted by humility; borne up by the benefits that flow from the atonement of Christ amid all the trials of life; armed with confidence in the immediate approach of

death ; enabled to go down with a steady step into the grave, in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life through Him who is the first-fruits, and there to meet our glorious Redeemer, to be gathered together from the East, from the West, from the North, and from the South—persons of all classes and configurations, from all climes and from all conditions, to stand in the presence of that Redeemer, to celebrate His praises, to share in His triumphs, to partake of His bliss, to be assimilated into His likeness, the transcendent original of all possible perfection—all clearly show the ineffable, infinite, and manifold wisdom of God.

II. But I hasten to remind you of the *character of these students*—'principalities and powers in heavenly places'—expressions evidently referring to angelic beings and angelic orders. Hence, we remark at once that they are *humble* students. That they should approach with profoundest reverence the shrine of splendour in which Jehovah dwells, as they watch the evolutions of His perfections, catch the outbeamings of His glory, benignity, and beneficence, to fill their hearts with gladness and to tune their lips with praise, is not all surprising.

The marvel brought out in the text is that these principalities and powers, notwithstanding the dignity of their person, the loftiness of their station, the extent of their influence, should bend from their seats in heaven, or quit those seats and come down to the Church on earth to be instructed in the wisdom of God, as displayed in our redemption. There are persons that we have met with, so perched up on the pinnacle of their pride, and so wrapt up in their own conceit, that they live and die in ignorance, rather than receive instruction from any that they imagine to be of lower rank than themselves. Let them be ashamed by the example of these principalities and powers in heavenly places coming down among us, coming down to the Church as their preceptor, and learning lessons from us that they cannot learn anywhere else—through the Church getting information respecting the manifold wisdom of God. If you inquire how this is done, we answer, first, that they get information on this subject from the facts in the history of the Church. With all of them they have been, doubtless, well acquainted. They knew about the fall ; they knew that cherubim were placed at the east gate to keep the way unto the tree of life ; they knew all the law given on Sinai, for it was given by the disposition of angels, and they were there in attendance in twenty thousand chariots ; and while God was engraving the commandments on the two tables of stone, those angelic beings were hovering around, and were arranging the whole of that wondrous scenery, impelling the clouds, rolling the thunders, and flashing the lightnings, and waiting upon their Lord and ours. They

receive information of the miracles and wonders that were wrought in behalf of the Church, and of the separation of one nation from the rest of the world, among whom a pure form of worship was established, through the revelations that have been made to the Church from time to time.

When holy men wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, those angels were there watching every sentence that came from their pen as fast as it was thrown on the vellum. Hebrew roots and Greek verbs were alike easy to those angelic beings. All that was written in the Old Testament and the New has been closely studied by those dignified beings; but frequently they were employed directly from the privy council of heaven with messages to the Church on earth. Everything connected with the Lord, your Redeemer, deeply interested those principalities and powers. They announced His birth; they ministered to Him in the wilderness; they strengthened Him in the garden; they hovered around the cross; they were present at the sepulchre in the morning of the resurrection; and when your Redeemer had completed His work below, cherubic legions guarded Him home, and shouted Him welcome to the skies. They get information on this subject by their ministry in the Church. Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs to salvation? The cherubim of glory covered the mercy-seat; and wherever there is a house erected for the worship of God, where His name is proclaimed, where His ordinances are administered, where His Gospel is preached, where His glory is displayed, there are the angels. Why; Paul tells the women to come into the temple in modest apparel because of the angels.

> 'Angels now are hov'ring round us,
> Unperceived they meet the throng,
> Wond'ring at the love that crown'd us,
> Glad to join the holy song.
> Hallelujah!
> Love and praise to Christ belong.'

They have heard more Gospel sermons than any of us. They are present wherever the Gospel is preached. In those churches where the Gospel is most simply, plainly, pointedly, faithfully, and affectionately preached are these angels of God—not to admire the preacher, the gracefulness of his gesture, the elegance of his diction, the skill of his argumentation, but angels are present to ascertain the effects which the Gospel is making on the minds and hearts of the hearers. They think little about the language of the speaker; they catch his announcement; they watch whether the great truths are finding a lodgment in your hearts; whether they are producing godly sorrow in your souls, and a loathing of the

depravity the devil has generated in your hearts; whether you are beginning to deprecate the penalty to which your sins expose you, and to supplicate the mercy that you need, whether you are willing to comply with the simple, expeditious method of salvation by faith in the great sacrifice. They are here observing whether the Gospel to which you are listening is producing a new creation; whether they can see the clean thing arising out of an unclean, and your entire surrender of yourselves to the great Redeemer.

They are, secondly, *intelligent* students. At first, they were created with vast capacities, endowed with faculties for appreciating, acquiring, and relishing knowledge. As with the force of instinct, as with the faculty of intuition, these mighty spirits gather up information, and every accession to their stock of useful knowledge is an increase to their blessedness. They are represented in my text as dwelling at the seat of knowledge; they are principalities and powers in heavenly places, looking at all surrounding objects, and all subjects for investigation in the clear, strong, steady light that shines from the throne, in the midst of whose radiations they perpetually stand; they hear in their first utterances commands that regulate the movements of the universe; they catch in their first dispersion from the central fountain of light rays that diffuse glory and joy throughout their Lord's domain. They may have witnessed the creation of another and another sun as bright and beautiful as that great one that is shining down upon us this morning, as it poured forth its splendours for the first time, when up to that moment all was darkness and desolation.

All the beauties of nature are spread out before the angels, all the footsteps of providence they are permitted to track, but the scene of redemption would arrest an angel in his flight to witness the creation of another sun or another system. He would hover round it; he would gaze upon it; he would discover in it an effulgence of Deity not to be discovered elsewhere, that would lead him to pronounce redemption to be the favourite, the master-work of the great Jehovah. What the men of this world call foolishness, these principalities and powers proclaim to be a display of the manifold wisdom of God; a display of the perfections of Jehovah in their greatest assemblage, and in their most diversified aspects. It is from redemption that they catch a radiance that throws a light on every other subject of their study. It is here that their capacious powers can find room for their expansion, and for constant investigation.

Though bold, bad men of our days pronounce the Gospel to be a fiction, though they declare that there is much in it offensive to taste and repugnant to reason—men who, one-half of them, have never read

the Gospel attentively in their lives, throw bitter ridicule and scorn against the Gospel. My sainted friend, Adam Clarke, said to one of this class: 'Have you ever read this Gospel you are condemning thus?' He was obliged to acknowledge that he had never read it in his life. This is the character of the men—men of empty heads and of rotten hearts—men daring to hold their farthing candle to the sun, and who dare to sit in judgment on God's revelation, snatching from His hand the balance and the rod, judging His justice. Now, these men, wrapped up in their own conceit, pronounce the Gospel to be foolishness; and here are principalities and powers, full of eyes, who, after an investigation of ages and close application in the study of the Bible, pronounce, as the result of their investigation, that they cannot find a single error in the whole of the Gospel—that they have met with no contradiction, that there is no such thing as a guess on the part of the inspired writers of this blessed book. These beings of mighty intellectual perspicacity of mind are bending awe-struck under it; they are intent upon understanding it; they are wrapped in its vision and entranced by its charms. 'Which things the angels desire to look into.'

I remark, next, that they are *devout* students. The subject is about God; the wisdom of God. They study the subject not to gratify vain curiosity. Their desire is to know more of God, more of the wisdom of God, to obtain clearer, brighter, loftier, more impressive, and more influential views of God, that they may love Him more intensely, and that they may serve Him more faithfully. Some of them are called seraphim, which means the burning ones, to intimate that love to God burns clearly, intensely, and perpetually in their every breast. Love to God sits enshrined in them. There is no beauty that so fascinates those angels as that moral beauty that throws a softening lustre over the sterner attributes of the Godhead: they do always see His face, in whose presence there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. Oh! the bliss of those lovely beings as they stand amid the splendours of that throne, as they engage in the high services of that temple, as they sing the heavenly hosannas, as one cherub echoes to another, or when they are rising in full chorus, until their voices are as the sound of many waters, making the high arches of the great temple ring. The glory of God is the element of their being. Now they are engaged in this study, then they are wrapped in its vision, then they strike their harps to its praise. Every disclosure of purpose, every development of the attributes of the Godhead, is a source of joy to those angels, whether they are engaged in contemplation, in acclamation, or, at their Lord's command, fly to distant worlds. Now, if their great object is to know God, where can they know Him as in the scheme of redemption? Where can they behold the light

of the knowledge of the glory of God but in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ? Where can the principalities and powers behold with open face the convergence of its brightest beams but in the glorious Gospel of the blessed God?

I remark, further, that they are *interested* students. I could quote passages, I think, in support of this statement. Our Wesley beautifully expresses it in a couplet from one of the most splendid hymns in the English language (and I regret, bishop, that you have not transferred it from our old English hymn-book to yours). The couplet is this:

> 'The blood that did for us atone
> Conferred on them [angels] some gift unknown.'

What the gift was, we may not exactly determine. It was not redemption, for, having never sinned, they needed not to be redeemed; but this is probable—that, though they are not the subjects of redemption personally, they are benefited by our redemption, and the blood that procured heaven for us has secured heaven throughout eternity to those angels. They were once on probation; some of their associates abused their free agency; there was war in heaven—the rebels were hurled over its battlements, and cast down to hell to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. Those angels who kept their first estate are now probably confirmed in that state. And how are they confirmed? Wherein lies the impossibility of those angels sinning? They are not confirmed in that state by force; they are not confirmed by being deprived of their free agency; they are free, and yet they cannot sin, and that arises from the fact that there have been brought to bear upon their judgments, and upon their affections, arguments and influences so strong of the character of God, His inflexible justice, His inviolable faithfulness, His immaculate purity, His boundless goodness, as well as the tremendous evil of sin, as to render it impossible, while those arguments and influences are bearing upon them from the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for them now to break away from the throne of the Eternal, and rebel against His Majesty. They are, therefore, benefited by this scheme of redemption. This scheme of redemption gives royalty to their throne, extension to their dominions, and strength to their powers.

I remark, finally, that they are *benevolent* students. Love to God sits supreme in their breasts. In heaven they have the purest affection, one toward another. But the bond to which I here refer is that they extend their benevolent regards to the inhabitants of those distant rebellious provinces of their Lord's domain. Love is the very element of their being. It is love that beautifies their robes and gives radiance to their crowns, that gilds the sphere in which they move, and tunes the harmonies that they are perpetually warbling: love to us so generous in

its origin, and so perpetual in its continuance. They likely knew that God was about to create a being in His own image and after His own likeness, and that that race would occupy a nearer circle to the throne of the Eternal than they themselves occupied. And yet, if they had this knowledge, there was not a particle of envy or jealousy in the breasts of those principalities and powers at our creation. Those morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. At the birth of our Redeemer the voice of song from all the cherub choirs and seraphs' burning lyres, poured from the hosts of heaven the charmed clouds along, 'Glory to God in the highest!' they shouted when our Redeemer was born, 'Peace on earth, good-will toward men;' and they were thrown into a very ecstasy at your conversion. 'I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.' There is no gem ever dug from earth's mine, or that ever adorned the diadem of the monarch, so beautiful in the eyes of those angels as the penitential tear dropping from your cheeks. There is no music in the whole symphonies of the universe so melodious to those principalities and powers as the sigh of that contrite one, or the groan of such as are sorrowful. Let but a prodigal in the church this morning be heard saying, 'I will arise and go to my Father;' let compunction seize any of your hearts, godly sorrow be indulged, and the enquiry made, 'Where is He that is born King of the Jews?' and angels are by your side in the twinkling of an eye, with all their sympathies.

If this is the case, how are you to be brought to repentance but by the Gospel? How is your pride to be humbled, your rebellion subdued, your apathy destroyed, your impurity washed away, your sins pardoned, your hearts regenerated, and your souls entirely sanctified, but through the Gospel? The Gospel contains the only remedy for your malady; the Gospel, and the Gospel only, is the power of God unto salvation to those who believe. The angels, desirous of knowing more of God, are anxious to witness the effects of this Gospel in your salvation. If any of you this morning by an act of faith will grasp the cross, apprehend and appropriate to yourselves the merits of the Redeemer's blood, instantly will those angels encamp round about you, taking you in charge, bearing you up in their arms, conducting you through the difficulties of life, warding off the attacks of the infernal spirits, cheering you in the hour of death, and, when your spirits shall be enfranchised, angels shall be in attendance to conduct you to the upper regions, as they did poor Lazarus, who died at the gate of the rich man, and shall introduce you into the presence of their Lord and yours, and shall be your associates in that better world. You shall hear from their own lips information that you cannot acquire here.

I have designedly avoided entering, minutely, at least, on the duties, discouragements, or encouragements of our younger brethren about to enter into this ministry. May the directions given be engraved by the Spirit of God in the minds and hearts of all our young brethren, and even on their seniors. I cannot close the subject without reminding them that I have called their attention to the studies of those principalities and powers, not to excite mere admiration, but for their imitation. I wish ministers here this morning to imitate these angelic beings, first in their estimation of the Gospel, and in their attachment to it. They have refined taste, keenness of intellect, and the greatest powers of ratiocination, they can enjoy the beauties of scenery around, but the Gospel, as I have shown you, is the great subject they delight to study. The Bishop well observed last Thursday that you should keep up with the times, that you should read various books, that you should get your minds well furnished with important information, and here let me add, but let all bear upon the pulpit. All the reading, all the studies, all the observations of Christian ministers, in one way or other, should be made to bear on their pulpit ministrations. Nothing must you ever substitute for the Gospel. No scraps of history, no metaphysical disquisitions, no specimens in botany, no discoveries in astronomy, or what else, must you ever substitute for the Gospel. This Gospel, the subject of angelic studies, you must make prominent. Infidelity is awfully prevalent up and down some of your States. I have found there are wicked men going through your country, slyly going into houses and offering to sell books and maps for the purpose of subverting, if possible, our heavenly Christianity. They would pluck the crown from my Redeemer's head ; they would snatch the sceptre that He has wielded ; they would overthrow, if they could, the everlasting throne on which He is seated. See that you stand up for this divine Gospel ; see that you maintain and bring out very clearly the glorious doctrine of atonement. Let me add another word, that you are never by any means to hide the great sacrifice. It is possible, by the flowers of rhetoric, by the desire to display skill in logic, by even telling in the pulpit sensational anecdotes, to hide the Redeemer. I don't care by what you hide Him—by flowers of rhetoric, or metaphysical disquisitions, or politics, or scraps of history, or poetry—if you hide my Saviour, majestic as He hangs there on the cross, uplifted in His own simplicity, you damage me. Whatever diverts my attention from the cross, whatever dims my vision of the cross, whatever chills my affections to the cross, whatever would cover the glory of the cross and tend to envelop me in darkness, whatever shakes my confidence in that cross, tends to hurl me from the rock into the dark, stormy waters. Deprive people of the Atonement in your ministry, and they will be beggared and bankrupt

through eternity. Bring it out, and imitate these angels in their profound *humility*. Display no haughtiness in your investigation of the Bible; let there be the profoundest reverence as you turn over the pages. Do not for a moment allow the thought to have occupancy of your mind, that you have detected any error in the Bible. If there be a passage the depth of which you cannot fathom, the height of which you cannot reach, always attribute it to your ignorance, not to any error on the part of the great Author. There is no contradiction in the Bible, from the first verse in Genesis to the last of Revelation; it is pure truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—connected, comprehensive, complete truth—everything necessary to the salvation of the people. Do not sit in judgment on the Gospel; let all rule, and authority and power, bow down submissively to the authority of its great Author.

And, then, imitate the angels in their devotional spirit; let all your studies of the Bible tend to draw you more closely to God, and assimilate you to Him. 'Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth.' Feel the sanctifying influences of the Gospel, as you study it from time to time, until you are drawn into the most intimate, delightful, unbroken, and transforming fellowship with its Author, and realise, in your individual experience, the delightful sentiment: 'God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him.'

Again, imitate them in their perseverance. These angels for thousands of years have been studying this Book, and are not tired yet, but are still bending down and examining it. There are glories in the Gospel which no angel in heaven has yet discovered; there are treasures in this dear old Book that those principalities and powers have not yet fathomed. Young ministers, dread more than you dread an attack of paralysis, the loss of a relish for the great truths of the Gospel. The Bishop told you last Thursday that you were in danger of it. He stated that, after a few years passed away, and you lost the buoyancy of youth, you might sink down into a very ordinary class of ministers. That profound theologian—Richard Watson—remarked to me, 'Brother Dunn, you have attended Conference some years; you have heard, annually, superintendents recommend forty or fifty young men to the ministry, with characters as if they were perfect prodigies;' and then he significantly said: 'Can you tell me what has become of all these young prodigies?' Those young men, so popular the first, second, or third year of their ministry, when they travel eight or ten years, and lose the buoyancy and elasticity of youth, have lost their relish for preaching, they give up study, and preach their old sermons over and over again, till they are a burden to themselves and a burden to the Church.

I observe once more, imitate the angels in their benevolence. Oh!

catch their announcement, which they made on the plains of Bethlehem : 'Behold ! we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.' Let this be the burden, my young friends, of your ministry. Go out with the Saviour in your hearts, and the Gospel in your hands ; rush into every open door ; rush on the assailing foe, and valorously take his strongholds ; wave the banner of the cross before all your enemies, in spite of all discouragements, persecutions, and oppositions ; proclaim the Gospel ; be willing to subject yourselves to any inconvenience ; feel that while you are an ambassador of Christ, even the Bishop cannot send you to an appointment where the Lord Jesus would not have you go. Do not count your life dear unto you, so that you may finish your course with joy, and the ministry you have received of the Lord Jesus.

One word more. I recently completed my seventieth year, and the fiftieth of my ministry. I have been blessed during the whole of that time with remarkable health—not with a very robust constitution, but a very sound one. I have not been weary, during those fifty years, of preaching this glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have preached it in sunny climes, and by the snow-capped mountains ; in the silent plain, and in the market-place, in fields, in halls of science, and on the decks of ships, and am not weary. But you must increase, and I must decrease :

> 'Happy if, with my latest breath,
> I may but gasp His name—
> Preach Him to all, and cry in death
> "Behold ! behold the Lamb !"'

SERMON VI.

THE HOLINESS OF GOD.*

'GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS.'—*Exodus* xv. 11.

SUCH a conception of the Deity as this never entered the mind of an idolator. The most renowned gods of the heathen have been the greatest models of impurity. Gods hateful, changeful, passionate, unjust, whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust. Their own philosophers dared not to propose for imitation the objects of the people's adoration. Idolatry has not improved by age. There are still millions, even in our Queen's dominions, lately visited by her son, who daily prostrate themselves before objects the most filthy, abominable, and cruel. How totally debased must man have become before the spirit of adoration could be excited by a sight of sin. We should have thought that when he had sunk to the lowest point of degradation, whatever opinion he might have of himself, there would be the impression that the object of his worship was pure. The reverse of this is the case, and the essence of the crime of idolatry is not in worshipping a piece of wood, metal, or ivory, but in substituting for the ever-blessed God, personifications of sin. Here it is that we see its horrid turpitude, and man in nearest approximation to the great apostate spirit who said, 'Evil, be thou my good.'

It is when we contrast the religion of the Bible with every system of idolatry that we discover its infinite superiority. Our text is from the song sung by Moses and the Israelites, in commemoration of their wonderful deliverance from numerous and powerful foes. He contrasts the objects of the Egyptians' idolatry with the God we adore. The greater portion of them were fictions, nonentities, and the genealogy of the remainder monstrously fabulous. They all had a beginning: Jehovah is from eternity. They were inventions, or supposed to be the offspring of blind uncertainty: our God is self-existent. They were circumscribed: our God is everywhere. They were so powerless as not to be able to prevent the plagues directed against them, nor to

* A sermon preached in the Free Church, Islington, London, June 11th, 1876, by Samuel Dunn, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, New York East Conference.

save their votaries from destruction in the Red Sea, but were utterly confounded and rendered despicable: our God has all the elements under perfect control, and the resources of omnipotence at command. 'He hath triumphed gloriously.' The gods of Egypt and the surrounding nations were ferocious and villainous, worshipped amid horrid yells, impostures, and obscenities. Our God is immaculately pure. Well did Moses take up the triumphant challenge: 'Who is like unto Thee, O Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like Thee? Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises:'— so holy as not to be approached without the deepest reverence and fear. Attend to this proposition. God is glorious in holiness. We shall attempt, by His aid, an explanation, illustration, and application of this great and interesting truth.

EXPLANATION.

Holiness in God is His utter abhorrence of all evil, and perfect love of all righteousness. The absolute, universal, and unchangeable rectitude of His nature. 'He is of purer eyes than to behold evil.' He cannot look upon iniquity. Sin is the abominable thing that He hateth. He is the negative of all that is not good. Fury is not in Him, nor envy, hatred, malice, revenge, tyranny, cruelty, falsehood, or injustice, and with whatever else is sinful holiness can have no fellowship. If at any time you meet with a delineation of Him, or His acts, that appears to imply vice or imperfection, it is your duty at once to repel the thought, saying, 'This is not God, this cannot belong to Him.' If you cannot explain it, owing to the feebleness of your faculties and poverty of language, as mists from earth may obscure the rays of the sun while he goes forth in his own splendour, so when clouds are round about Jehovah, rest assured that He is 'glorious in holiness.' And holiness in Him is something more than the mere absence of sin. He forbids it, abhors, repels, and condemns it, is at an infinite distance from it, and in eternal opposition to it. The negative quality involves a positive excellence; an intense, unvarying disposition, tendency, propension in all His thoughts, feelings, words, and actions, to that which is good, and a perfect delight therein. 'The righteous Lord loveth righteousness.'

Primitive. It was in the beginning with Him, and so without a beginning, original, co-existent, underived, and independent. It belongs to Him absolutely in His eternal essence. As His will is the standard and rule of holiness, so His nature is necessarily characterised by it; His being made up of it as light is of the nature of the sun. As it 'is impossible for God to lie, and cannot deny Himself,' so He cannot but be holy. He might as easily cease to exist as cease

to be holy. It has not been acquired and added to His nature, nor is it separable from it. Not an acquisition, but His essence; not distinct from Himself, but Himself; a principle inhering in the one infinite, undivided Godhead, peculiarly and inalienably a perfection of Deity, admitting of no compromise of principle or character. To be deprived of it by others, or to relinquish it Himself, is alike impossible from the very perfection of His nature. Self-sufficient, He is infinitely happy in the possession and contemplation of His own glorious excellences.

Immutable. If an essential perfection, it can have 'no variableness, nor shadow of turning.' The holiness of creatures is conformity to His will, and is derived and dependent. The nature of angels is mutable. Some of them left their first estate; and the security of those who retain their holiness arises not from any immutability in themselves, but from the purpose and power of Jehovah. He is the sum and standard, the author and maintainer of holiness. Out of His fulness we receive. From Him the crystal streams flow. He lights the lamp, and feeds the flame. He is the great fountain ever flowing, and yet ever full. The resplendent sun, perpetually diffusing His rays, yet without any diminution of splendour. Were His holiness an arbitrary principle, depending on something else, then it might be dispensed with, and He act in opposition to it, and become an object of dread, but not of love and confidence. Power might then degenerate into tyranny, wisdom into subtlety, justice into vindictiveness, mercy into partiality, and patience into indifference to sin. But it is our happiness to know that the God we worship is original, eternal and unchangeable holiness, possessed of it in perfection and in inexhaustible treasures. As He exists universally, is partially existent nowhere, but is perfectly existent everywhere, holiness must be inseparable from Him at all times and under all circumstances. From everlasting to everlasting immutably the same.

Transcendental. We would not forget that all the attributes Divine perfectly harmonise. One is never exercised at the expense of the others. Each is perfect in its kind, and in its degree. All exist in, and are inseparable from, His simple indivisible and pure essence. But it does not follow that they are all alike displayed. Wisdom, or mere ability to devise, is not a moral excellence; nor is power, or mere ability to execute. Satan has these, without a single good principle. But there can be neither justice nor truth without holiness. This is necessary to, and comprehensive of, whatever qualities are really excellent. In our text God is said to be 'glorious in holiness,' infinitely resplendent in holiness. This He considers His glory. Arrayed in it, He is the perfection of beauty. We do not view it so much a distinct attribute, as an

essential character or quality of the Divine Being. Like majesty, dignity, greatness, glory, it may be considered as the brilliance that arises from the assemblage of all His perfections. The other moral qualities depend on His holiness. It is supreme, and from it the others flow. 'God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.' Supremely holy, without the least shade of error or taint of impurity; infinitely distant from the possibility of anything foul or impure, or unworthy of Himself. Only holiness expresses the perfection of moral excellence as existing in God alone. 'Thou only art holy.' Essentially, absolutely, pre-eminently. He is enthroned in holiness. This dignifies wisdom, secures the exercise of power, directs goodness, and guards faithfulness. It adorns and perfects all the rest; connecting, regulating, sustaining, restraining, and consummating all. A perfection arising from all the others, and is the assurance of the rectitude of His administration, and of His impartiality in all His dealings with His creatures. It has an equal relation to all His natural and moral attributes, is the sum total of His excellences, the combination of His perfections, and the spring and guide of His own conduct.

ILLUSTRATION.

He never created a rational creature—the only creature capable of holiness—without impressing him with holiness the instant He brought him into being. The *angels* were created holy; and while they retained their holiness, they were privileged to stand in His presence, witness the evolutions of His perfections, and to receive communications from Him, seated in His pavilion of light, a shrine of splendour, and on a throne of unapproachable magnificence, that filled their hearts with gladness, and tuned their lips to praise. To them, with their lengthened history, the station they have occupied, and the service in which they have been engaged, the evidence that God is 'glorious in holiness' must be overwhelming. There is no undue familiarity. They worship with profoundest reverence.

> 'Dark with excessive light His skirts appear,
> Yet dazzle heaven: that brightest seraphim
> Approach not; but with both wings veil their eyes.'

What is their testimony to the holiness of Him they adore? When they would set forth His highest honours, on what do they fix? On His eternity? No. On His power or wisdom? No; but on His holiness. They cry, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.' Thus showing that holiness is the object of their highest admiration, the theme of their loftiest songs, and the brightest jewel in Jehovah's crown. But when sin was introduced into heaven,

He, who is 'glorious in holiness,' immediately showed His abhorrence of the evil by expelling the introducers of it from the regions of purity, and casting them down to hell, to be 'reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day.'

When our *First Parent* was to be brought into being, God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;' in holiness and righteousness; and his Maker pronounced him to be very good; and while he remained holy God delighted to hold communion with him. The moment holiness was lost, intercourse terminated, and he was driven out of Paradise, and the earth cursed because of sin. And here we may remark that He not only created man holy, but so constituted him that he must derive happiness from holiness, and misery from sin, thereby showing that His intent was, that he should practise the one and avoid the other.

God's holiness throws a *glory* on, and gives a *sanctity* to, everything with which it is connected. The day set apart specially for His service is called a 'holy day;' His people are called a 'holy people;' the ground on which God admitted Moses to an audience is called 'holy ground;' the mountain where He manifested His presence is called the 'holy mount;' the temple, in which He was worshipped, His 'holy temple;' and heaven, as His palace, is called His 'holy heaven. Again, the emblem of His *power* is called His 'holy arm;' of His *omniscience*, 'the eyes of His holiness;' of His *presence*, 'the holy of holies;' of His *majesty*, 'the throne of His holiness.'

He Himself assumes it: 'My name is holy.' 'Holy and reverend is His name.' By His own designation He is the 'Holy One of Israel.' Saints are called to 'give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness;' to worship Him in the 'beauty of holiness;' to lift up their hands towards His 'holy oracle.' The language of the sanctuary is, 'Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.' 'Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, for ever.'

How impressive the *Scripture testimony*. From beginning to end it is an illustration of His holiness. Emphatically designated, '*Holy* Scripture, given by inspiration of God,' and exactly suited to 'make us perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.' The *writers* were holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The *law* it proclaims is, 'holy, and just, and good,' a transcript of His unsullied mind, a revelation of His righteous will. The first and great commandment is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' 'Be ye holy, for I am holy.' The *exhortations* and prohibitions: 'Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Wash you, make

you clean ; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes ; cease to do evil ; learn to do well ; ' and all the terrible *judgments* it records, such as the general deluge, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, all display His aversion to sin, and love of what is true, honest, just, pure, and lovely. So the *promises*. These are exceedingly great and precious, and their special design is, that we may be ' partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' Again, ' Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' The *prayers* teach the same truth, ' Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.' Likewise the *examples*. The bad, as beacons to warn us of evil ; the good, to encourage us to follow holiness. *Chastisements*. We have had fathers of our flesh, who chastened us after their own pleasure, but the Father of spirits for our profit, that we might be ' partakers of His holiness.'

The life and death of Christ. He was the personification of holiness. He conversed with sinners without contracting any defilement ; while surrounded by masses of depravity, remained as pure as the drifted snow of the mountains : ' Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.' Without sin, incapable of sin. From His bitterest foes He extorted the confession of His innocence. Judas : ' I have betrayed innocent blood ; ' Herod : ' He hath done nothing amiss ; ' Pilate : ' I can find no fault in Him.' Even the demons exclaimed, ' We know Thee, who Thou art, the Holy One of God.'

The *death* of Christ was the most illustrious proof that God is ' glorious in holiness.' Some speak of it as if at variance with love, as if love would have granted a gratuitous pardon ; but holiness refused without a compensation. This is a perversion of the truth. Love never desired what holiness was not ready to grant. They are in perfect harmony. There is no pre-eminence of either. Holiness, that no encouragement might be given to sin, demanded an atonement : love sent Jesus to make it. Holiness saw the evil and desert of sin, love provided a deliverer from it. Christ came as much to illustrate the holiness as to display the love of God : ' Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God ; yea, Thy law is within my heart.' God sent His Son Jesus to bless us, in turning away every one of us from his iniquities. Again, ' Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. It is certain that Christ's death was *voluntary*, and equally clear is it, that He submitted to His unprecedented sufferings to manifest God's holiness, by atoning for the sins we had committed and magnifying the law we had violated. It is expressly declared that ' He gave

Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' In all His sufferings God had a direct and holy agency. The voice from heaven had been heard again and again, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;' and yet it is written, 'It pleased the Father to bruise Him, and to put Him to grief.' How can this be explained, unless the sufferings of Christ for the world's redemption were necessary; and that Jehovah, rather than holiness should be stained, would stain the cross.

The means for the communication of holiness. The *Holy Spirit* is the great and only efficient agent; He, in gracious condescension, convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. His design in all His illuminating, regenerating, and purifying influences is to transform us into the Lord's image, from glory to glory.

The *ministry* is instituted for the awakening of sinners, the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ: 'To turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified.' All the other ordinances are intended to be channels for the conveyance of holiness to the believing soul, until we all come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

The *final judgment.* Men may now deny it; but the day will declare it. This life is probationary and disciplinary; hence, there is not an exact distribution of sufferings and comforts: many are the afflictions of the righteous. The wicked have often all their hearts can desire. But 'the Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works.' He will at last adjust everything according to the rules of strictest equity. All His dispensations He will submit to the inspection of the universe; and when the joyful or appalling sentence shall be pronounced: the 'Come, ye blessed,' or 'Depart, ye cursed,' there will not be one on the right hand, or the left, but will acknowledge that the Judge of all the earth has done right; 'Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments.' And it is worthy of remark, that the saints who have gotten the victory, and stand upon the sea of glass, Rev. xv., refer to this very chapter. They sing the song of Moses, who overthrew Pharaoh and his hosts, as well as the song of the Lamb, who redeemed us by His blood. So in chapter xix., when Babylon the great has fallen, they shout mightily, 'Alleluia: salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are His judgments." Thus celebrate His justice and His mercy; His holiness and His love.

APPLICATION.

If God is 'glorious in holiness,' then seek you to be holy, that you may *please* Him. Your prayers may be lengthy, offerings expensive, sacrifices painful, ceremonies imposing; but without holiness they are more offensive than sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. *We* often admire persons on account of their wealth, power, or position in society: God never does. Holiness is man's highest perfection, and sin his lowest debasement. The poor righteous man is more excellent than his ungodly rich neighbour. Holiness is for glory and beauty. Let it be thy adorning, and thy name shall be Hephzibah, for then the Lord delighteth in thee.

Serve Him. 'The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself;' but to the wicked He saith, 'What hast thou to do to declare My statutes?' You must be clean if you would bear the vessels of the Lord; sanctified, before you can be meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work. Destitute of holiness, you have neither the will nor the power to labour in extending His cause. Holiness is the principle that begets and the fountain from whence flows the strength necessary to enable you to do and suffer His will? The good and faithful servant will hear Him say, 'Well done;' but the slothful servant He will cast into outer darkness.

Resemble Him. Holiness is conformity to His will, the participation of His nature, the impress of His image. Your possession of wealth and honour constitutes no likeness to Him. Angels are not distinguished from devils by their wisdom or strength, but by holiness; and it is only as this is written on your hearts, and exemplified in your tempers and conduct, that the beauty of the Lord our God will be upon you, and He will dwell in you, and be your God, and you shall be His people.

Hold communion with Him. Even here only the pure in heart can see God. Righteousness can have no fellowship with unrighteousness. This, those of you who are living in sin know by sad experience. You have no desire for His favour, or delight in His service. You try to forget Him, would hide yourselves from Him like your first parents in the garden, after their loss of holiness. The contemplation of it disturbs your peace; its splendour irritates like the rays of the sun falling upon a diseased eye; and it is not possible for Him, who is 'glorious in holiness,' to hold communion with an unholy soul. Sin first separated man from his Maker, and a continuance in sin must prevent a union; but He loves His people, and all His saints are in His hand.

Be prepared to *enter His presence*, where there is fulness of joy Everything connected with that palace of our glorious King is holy;

the employment and the enjoyment. 'There shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, or that loveth and maketh a lie.' The inhabitants are all without fault before the throne, and are arrayed in the fine linen, clean and white. The entrance of the unclean would pollute the city, disturb the harmony, impair the bliss of its inhabitants, and dishonour its Lord. But this cannot be; His stainless purity must be opposed to all impurity. Sin was the cause of man's expulsion from the earthly paradise, and will assuredly exclude you from the paradise above. 'Without holiness no man can see the Lord.'

Holiness is the same in essence wherever it exists; but in God and the creature it widely differs. In Him, as we have seen, it is essential, absolute, immutable. In us derived, dependent, and changeable. Hence you are commanded to *seek* it. Be ye holy. Feel your need of it, earnestly desire it, and diligently use the appointed means. On these we cannot enlarge. We only remark, that as God is the chief good, the supreme excellence, the perfection of beauty, the model of purity, 'glorious in holiness;' the devout contemplation of Him is promotive of holiness. We are naturally assimilated to the object with which we are familiar; but let it be with the profoundest humility and reverence. In worship, when thoughts wander, and pride would rise, place yourself in the light of His holiness, and blemishes will be detected, and defects in your best services, that will make you cry out, with Job, 'I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' And when emptied of sin and filled with holiness you will be prepared to join the saints and angels before the throne who rest not day and night, saying, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.'

'The God who reigns on high,
The great archangels sing;
And "Holy, holy, holy," cry,
Almighty King.
The whole triumphant host
Give thanks to God on high;
"Hail, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,"
They ever cry.'

SERMON VII.

PERFECT LOVE.*

'PERFECT LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR.'—1 *John* iv. 18.

IN a preceding verse of this chapter, the apostle gives us such a simple, and at the same time so finished a portraiture of the Divine Being, as was never furnished, nor even conceived, by philosophy after its long and most laborious researches. '*God is love.*' This is an axiom the most interesting, important, and sublime, that was ever penned. It is broad, deep, and high, beyond the imagination or understanding of any finite nature. It is clear without illustration, beautiful without embellishment, and fixed without any tendency to change. Did it require any proof, we would say that *the law* which He has given to us having made *love* the only object of its requisitions is sufficient; for if love be 'the fulfilling of the law,' if nothing else is deemed excellent and rewardable, then it must be the object in which the great Lawgiver supremely delights, and consequently is His own moral character.

In the context St. John *enforces our love to God from God's love to us.* He so loved us as to give His only begotten Son, therefore let us love Him. He hath pardoned and adopted us; 'we therefore love Him because He hath first loved us.' And this love to Him must not be languid, immature, occasional, but 'perfect.' 'Perfect love casteth out fear.'

Let us examine the characteristics and the operations of this principle.

I. ITS PROPERTIES. Love considered *naturally* is a genuine and predominant affection of the soul, an affection of which we cannot possibly divest ourselves, and an affection of universal operation. But *love to God* is not under the control of man. The human heart in its natural state is in possession of no principle analogous to the love of God: it is not *right* in the sight of God; it never contemplates Him with delight; it has no devout aspirations after Him; it breathes forth no warm desires for His favour; it evinces no solicitude to do His will. Principles directly *hostile* to this love are uninterruptedly in operation in unregenerate men; enmity

* Printed from the author's notes.

against God, contempt for His character, rebellion against His authority, and practical violation of His holy laws, are their essential characteristics. Nor is it possible, if left to themselves, ever to *generate* the 'love of God' in their souls. The *power* is not there. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.' As the love of God is, therefore, not the product of nature, nor essential to our being, nor under the control of human efforts, nor even originated by any serious or devout meditations of our own, we conclude that the love of God must be communicated *by* God, is the *result of a divine agency* to a mind previously prepared for its reception. 'The fruit of the Spirit is love,' not the *passion* of love, for that is the fruit of nature and inseparable from our being; but love *to God*, and it is not the fruit of the 'spirit of bondage,' but of the Spirit, as a Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, 'Abba, Father'; 'for the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,' and 'we love Him because He hath first loved us.' Hence they who love God are *justified*. Thus Christ said concerning a '*certain woman*' to whom He had showed mercy, 'Her sins, which are many, are all forgiven.' Therefore 'she loved much.' And St. Paul, after having spoken of being justified, adds, 'We rejoice in hope of the glory of God,' because 'the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.' Hence we come to the conclusion that our love to God is a reflection of His love to us, a fruit of His adopting love, a principle that can exist only in the regenerate mind, for 'every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.'

Now this love is never *imperfect* in *itself*, but it may be in *degree*. It may exist in the soul in a state of infantile weakness; it may be genuine and yet immature. 'New-born babes' love sincerely but not vigorously. There are different degrees of love. Some love *much*; others, differently circumstanced, love *little*.

The apostle in this epistle speaks of 'little children,' 'young men,' and 'fathers,' to show the different stages of the Christian life. Now the 'little child' whose 'sins are forgiven' him, has the love of God; and many of you have no doubt as to your love to God, yet at the same time you are painfully conscious that your love, though perfect in its nature, is imperfect in its degree. You feel an undue attachment to the world, an improper fondness for the creature, or an inordinate degree of self-love. Your confidence is sometimes disturbed by doubts, harassed by cares, and molested by fears; and 'he that feareth is not made perfect in love.' But the father in Christ has that 'perfect love which casteth out fear.'

Supreme. Indeed love to God cannot exist as a subordinate principle. As He possesses, from His being our Creator and Preserver, a *right* of absolute proprietorship *in* us; as He is supremely great and good in Him-

self, and alone capable of making us happy; our love to Him must be superlative, it must have the ascendency in the soul. It can admit of no rival to the glorious object on which it is set, it can mix with no principle unlike itself. It cannot be subordinated to the love of the *world*. 'Love not the world, neither the things of the world.' 'For if any man love the world,'—its honours, riches, pleasures—'the love of the Father is not in him.' It cannot be subordinate to the love of any *creature*, to the love of any of the *necessaries* or *comforts* of life. 'For if any man love houses, or land, father and mother, more than Me he is not worthy of Me.' He goes even further than this: 'If any man love his own *life* more than Me, he is not worthy of Me.' It must be the ascendant, the ruling principle. It esteems God as pre-eminently lovely. It more earnestly desires to enjoy Him than any other object. It has greater satisfaction and delight in the enjoyment of Him than any other enjoyment; would regret the *loss* of such enjoyment more than any other loss, and wishes above all things that His name may be glorified.

Pure. As St. Paul expresses it, 1 Tim. i. 5: 'The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of love unfeigned.' Where the heart is not entirely under the dominion of grace, and the body of sin totally destroyed, there the love of God is not perfected, it has not the complete occupancy of the heart; depraved principles maintain a struggle for the mastery; the motions of sin work powerfully in the members, and while any portion of the carnal mind remains, so much of that which is at enmity against God continues in operation. Hence, before love can be perfected, before it can reign sole monarch in the soul, the 'old man' must be destroyed. There is no way of dealing with enmity, but by its abolition or destruction. As every drop of poison is poison and will infect, and every spark of fire is fire and will burn, so everything of sin, the last and least of it, is enmity and will destroy. But when that promise is fulfilled—'I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes and do them;' when sin becomes extinct, when the infection of our nature is healed, when every evil passion, every principle of rebellion, every contrary disposition, is destroyed; then, and not till then, we love God perfectly.

Entire. It will not only admit of no *rival*, allowing neither the allurements of the world nor the charms of the creature to alienate it

from the object that has engrossed it ; but it admits of no comparison. The sacrifices which men have oft made to gratify the objects of their affections have almost exceeded credibility. Vows have been pledged, riches lavished, danger encountered, and health wasted at the shrine of earthly sensual love. But the Christian, when the Divine love is perfected in him, 'loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength.' His understanding to contemplate His infinite perfections, his will to submit to His wise dispensations, his affections to adore His matchless goodness ; all he is and all he has, everything in him, about him, or in any way belonging to him, is consecrated to God. Not a *part* of the heart is given to the Lord, it is *filled* with love, so that there is no room left for any other passion. The will is completely subjugated to His authority. The understanding is employed on no subject but what refers to God and tends to promote His glory. The *body* is a habitation of the Holy Spirit, and all its members are instruments of righteousness.

Thus the *whole* man is consecrated to God : nor does one part *interfere* with another. Some have considered love to God a mere *principle*, while others have regarded it as nothing more than a blind passion. The *mystics* have employed their imagination rather than their understanding, and have addressed Jehovah in terms unsuited to His spirituality—in the mere language of passion. While others endeavoured to expel the passions from religion, until nothing remained but a cold, barren speculation, calculating religion as a mathematical problem, which sheds a moonlight beam upon the judgment without melting the heart.

Now *true* love to God is *both a principle* and a *passion*, a principle which regulates the passions ; the affections are exercised but they are led and guided by the reason or judgment. Our love to God is founded in our experimental knowledge of God ; but when we know Him it places the affections on Him, it lifts the soul to Him, it leads the mind to seek its happiness from Him, to exercise the greatest complacency in Him, to realise Him as its supreme good, in the enjoyment of whom the soul meets with a supply of her every want, the gratification of every desire, a portion adapted to every need.

The perfect Christian lives in God and God lives in him. He basks with unutterable pleasure in the beams of His love.

> 'Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
> And lost in Thine immensity.'

Constant. It admits of no interruption. It is not a spark emitted from the blaze of worldly prosperity and fanned by the softness of worldly pleasure, but a flame enkindled by the Sun of Righteousness,

which many waters cannot quench, and like the fire on the altar it never goes out; it may not always burn with an equally perceptible intensity. There may be seasons of temptation, when the soul is in heaviness, when the enemy comes in like a flood, when the body loaded with pains and infirmities may weigh down the mind; but the extent of love must not be estimated by any ecstasy of feeling or flights of rapture, for these are often accidental circumstances attendant on this love rather than properties essential to its existence. Perfect love, however, cannot be interrupted by adversity, health, or ills of life. 'What can separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' The river may be obstructed, but our obligation is ever the same. What is due to Him to-day will be due to Him to-morrow, and to all eternity.

Practical. 'This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments,'—cheerfully and universally. Love to God will produce love to the brethren. 'If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar.' 'By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.' You will love His Sabbaths, His house, His ministers, His word, His ordinances, and your meditation of Him will be sweet.

Progressive. For though perfect it does not preclude the possibility of increase, or enlargement. The perfection of all finite beings is limited. The seraphims which surround the throne are capable of improvement; reason is progressive, it is ever on the advance; new ideas will be formed, sources of new enjoyment opened, habits of holiness confirmed, and love be more intense. So in the heart of the Christian the Holy Spirit, who is the sole Agent by which the love of God is there shed abroad, can shine with clearer light, communicate more profound discoveries of the exceeding riches of divine grace, and impress it with a deeper consciousness of the debt of endless gratitude it owes to God; this love will know no bounds to its existence, nor period to its increase. *Improvability* is a property of the soul. Religion, as a principle emanating from an infinitely perfect Being, can have no limitations.

II. Its Operation. 'It casteth out fear.' Here it will be necessary to enquire *what kind of fear* it casteth out. A *reverential* fear of God, a deep and humbling sense of the Divine Majesty arising from

devout meditations upon His glorious perfections, and on the manifestations of these glories in the works of creation, providence and grace, is certainly consistent with 'perfect love.' So also is a *cautionary* fear of the holiness, justice, and power of God, arising from a suitable impression of our spiritual dangers, and of our *conditional* liability to incur His displeasure. This restrains our faith from degenerating into presumption, our love into familiarity, and our joy into carelessness. It *nurtures* humility, watchfulness, and prayer. It induces a reverent habit of thinking and speaking of God, and gives solemnity to the exercises of devotion. It presents *sin* to us in its true aspect; and it gives *strength* and efficacy to that most important, practical, moral principle, the constant reference of our inward habits of thought and feeling, and our outward actions, to the approbation of God. Hence we are exhorted, 'Be not high-minded, but fear.' 'Fear lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.' 'Be in the fear of the Lord all the day long.' 'Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.' It exists *in the inhabitants of heaven;* they exclaim, 'Who would not fear Thee, oh Lord!' Nor does it cast out *natural* fear, which is necessary to the preservation of life. If, for instance, you see something about to fall on you, through fear you start aside, and save your life. You did well. A dreadful malady surrounds you, you fear its attack and use means to preserve your health, and that certainly was your duty. But the next clause shows what *sort* of fear it is that perfect love casts out, 'fear that hath torment.'

Servile fear. A painful apprehension of the displeasure of the Almighty. This is enjoined upon the ungodly, and to produce it, He denounces us, threatens and pours out His terrible judgments on the earth. The *penitent* painfully feels it, he has 'the spirit of bondage again to fear.'

Fear of meeting the necessaries of life. The righteous shall not be afraid.

The fear of man, which bringeth a snare.

The fear of the last enemy. He does not love death, neither does he dread it, the contemplation of it does not torment him. 'Oh, death, where is thy sting, oh grave, where is thy victory?'

The fear of Judgment. While the kings of the earth hide themselves in dens and caves, saying, 'Rocks and mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne;' those who are perfected in love shall have 'boldness in the day of His coming.'

The fear of Hell. All dread of being cast into the lake of fire annihilated.

How does it do this?

By removing sin. Sin is the cause of all tormenting fear, of all the

sorrow in the world; but where love is perfected, sin is destroyed; and the cause being removed, the effect ceases. He cannot fear God, who has no guilt upon his conscience, nothing that God hateth in his heart. 'God is love,' a lovely Being, and sin is the only thing that can lead men to contemplate Him with dread.

By transforming us into God's image. The perfection of religion is perfect love. Love is the element of all true holiness.

By perfecting all the other graces of Christianity. Faith is perfected by love. Distrust is the offspring of suspicion, and want of confidence is want of love. Perfect love must cast out all unbelief, dissipate every gloomy suspicion, and hush every distrustful fear, to confide in His veracity; and will lead us to believe that He will never leave or forsake us.

Where there is perfect love there is true *tranquillity*, undisturbed *serenity*, the sweetest *harmony;* all is peace—perfect, perpetual, eternal peace.

Patience also has its perfect work. Just indeed as love is perfected, *all* the other graces are matured within us, and where this is the case there is perfect *happiness*, the individual 'rejoices evermore.' He is happy through whatever he has to pass, and in every situation gives thanks.

To those who neither fear nor love God. There may be some in this assembly, some who feel no admiration for His excellences, no gratitude for His favours, no delight in Him as their portion. And you are indifferent about it. You fear Him not. His *wrath* abideth upon you, but you seem to feel it not. You are *exposed* to everlasting perdition, and yet you are insensible. Oh, think of your *ingratitude, folly, rebellion.* But be assured, if you will not submit to the *sceptre* of His mercy, He will make you submit to the *rod* of His justice. 'Tis dangerous to provoke a God. 'Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth.' 'Now, consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.'

To those who fear, but do not love Him. You know you have violated His law, and sinned against light and knowledge.

To those who both fear and love Him. You do think that He is altogether lovely, and that He cannot deny Himself, yet you have oft your 'doubts and fears,' you are painfully conscious that you are not made perfect in love. You sometimes feel ''Tis worse than death, your God to love, and not your God *alone.*' But why should this be, when God is this *moment willing* to end your legal years, and bring salvation in? *Believe for it*—that such a state is attainable, that, 'God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.' Be diligent in the use of the means. *Expect* it at all times—NOW.

To those who love without fear. In whom perfect love has cast out fear, if any of you *profess* it, suffer me to say, *honestly* and *frequently examine* yourselves. 'Take heed that ye be not deceived.' Value the blessing above gold. Seek daily to *abound* yet more and more in the love of God. Be deeply conscious, that every moment you *need* the merits of Christ's death. Live by faith. Remember, that you *may* fall; therefore be continually on your watch-tower. If at any time you are *overcome*, fly *back immediately* to the blood. *Walk* circumspectly. Adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. 'Be *looking* for the coming of the day of God,' when He shall present you to Himself, 'holy and unblamable, and unreprovable;' and in His presence you shall eternally live.

SERMON VIII.

WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

'THE SPIRIT ITSELF BEARETH WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT, THAT WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD.'—*Romans* viii. 16.

THE question, whether death will terminate or perpetuate our existence, is one of supreme importance, and of universal interest. If our pains and pleasures be circumscribed by the narrow boundaries of this life, such is our insignificancy, that we can possess nothing which may render us of much importance either to ourselves or to others. It matters but little what are our hopes, or what are our fears, if they have nothing to grasp beyond this transitory scene. Conscience is dethroned; the ungodly, 'who have their portion in this life,' may triumph; while the righteous, who are oft 'destitute, afflicted, tormented,' are of all men most miserable. But if, on the contrary, this life is only the 'bud of being,' and preparatory to another,—if the present state is probationary and disciplinary, and is shortly to be succeeded by a state unalterable and eternal,—and if, in that future state, we are to be rewarded or condemned according to the character which we here sustain, and the conduct which we now pursue; *then* the whole of religion assumes quite a different aspect; *then* a knowledge of the Divine favour must be valuable beyond description. Nothing but this can support the mind amidst the trials of life; can cheer the soul when about to quit the threshold of its clay tenement; can afford us, when the body 'shall return to the dust as it was,' a good hope of a resurrection to eternal life. How seriously, then, ought each to enquire, 'Are my sins pardoned? Am I a child of God?' Self-deception is common, but self-deception in this matter—especially if not discovered before it be too late to rectify it—must be attended with consequences the most tremendous. But is such knowledge attainable? and how may it be attained? The text, we think, points out an infallible method:—'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' Some suppose that the apostle here speaks of two witnesses—the Spirit of God, and our own spirit; and that these are represented as bearing witness conjointly to the fact 'that we are the children of God.' I am, however, rather

inclined to think, that in this passage he speaks only of the first of these two witnesses; that he represents the Spirit of God as giving the testimony, and our spirit as receiving it; that He witnesseth *to* our spirit. On this we do not enlarge, as it is to the witness of the Holy Spirit to which we now intend to call your attention. We shall attempt, First, an explanation, and, Secondly, a vindication of this important doctrine. And may He without whom nothing is wise, or good, or strong, grant us His assistance; 'what in us is dark, illumine; what is low, raise and support!' We shall endeavour,

I. To EXPLAIN THE DOCTRINE. And here, as there are more opinions than one afloat on the subject, let us consider,

1. *By whom the witness is given.* To ascertain this, let us refer to the context. In verse 1, He is termed 'the Spirit' after whom believers 'walk;' in verse 2, 'the Spirit of life,' that delivers us 'from the law of sin and death;' in verse 9, 'the Spirit of God,' and 'the Spirit of Christ;' in verse 11, 'the Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead,' and that 'shall quicken our mortal bodies;' in verse 13, 'the Spirit' through whom we 'mortify the deeds of the body;' in verse 14, the Spirit of God, by whom His sons are 'led;' in verse 15, 'the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;' and then follows the text: 'The Spirit itself'—or, as it may be rendered, The *same* Spirit—'beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' Now we ask, Is it likely that the inspired apostle would give these names, and ascribe such works—prerogatives of Deity—to a mere quality, or disposition; to our Christian temper, or 'the personified spirit of Christianity,' as some have imagined? Is it not most obvious, that by the 'Spirit itself' he means God the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the ever-blessed and adorable Trinity; who is the great agent in man's salvation from its commencement to its consummation; and 'who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified?'

2. *To whom the witness is made.* 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with *our* spirit, that *we* are the children of God.' Here are terms of restriction. Of whom then speaketh the apostle? Certainly not of any who are living in sin; for the Spirit testifies in His word, that all such are 'children of the wicked one:' and He cannot elsewhere bear an opposite testimony to what He has there borne; for 'the Spirit is truth.' Nor did the apostle intend to intimate that Christian baptism, a pious education, Church membership, a correct creed, an attention to hallowed forms of devotion, and uprightness in your external deportment, will entitle you to this privilege. You may possess all these things, and yet have no part or lot in the matter. Nor does he here refer to *penitents:*

their 'redemption draweth nigh,' they are 'not far from the kingdom of God;' but, as yet, they are 'servants,' and not 'sons.' He is doubtless speaking of *true believers*, of all true believers, and of true believers only; of those who have received the spirit of bondage to fear,—who have passed through that state of penitential sorrow, so affectingly described in the preceding chapter,—who have been shut up unto the faith,—who have come to Christ, received Christ, and cast themselves with a sole reliance on His infinitely meritorious sacrifice. Collate the following passages: 'As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name,' John i. 12. 'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father,' Gal. iv. 6. 'Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,' Gal. iii. 26; and, 'He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself,' 1 John v. 10. Here then it is declared that '*as many as receive Christ*, to them gives He power'—right, authority, privilege—'to become the sons of God;' and that, '*because* they are sons, God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' Hence we think we are warranted in saying, that this witness is the privilege of all true believers, and of them exclusively.

3. *To what the witness is borne.* Not to the change that takes place in the views and feelings of him who believes in Jesus; for, as conscious beings, we must know when a change takes place within us from darkness to light, from pain to pleasure, from grief to joy. We know this by a sort of intuitive evidence. Nor, when a reformation takes place in a man's life, is it necessary for the Holy Spirit to bear witness to it: those who have known him from his youth up can testify, if it be necessary, that he is not such a man as once he was. Besides, as regeneration is the *result*—the *immediate consequence*—of the Spirit's agency, *it* cannot be the fact to which His witness is borne, when He enters the heart as the Spirit of adoption. The Spirit witnesses to *that* which can only be known by the Spirit, and those to whom He shall reveal it. He testifies to our spirit, that 'we are the children of God;' that we who, in consequence of our base ingratitude, flagrant disobedience, and wilful departure from our heavenly Father, had been disinherited; that we, who were slaves to sin, the servants of Satan, the heirs of hell, are now 'the children of God;' that our sins are forgiven us; that we are absolved from all liability to punishment, are adopted into His family, have our *sonship* restored. Adoption is not so much a distinct act of God, as that it is involved in our justification. Hence it is not, perhaps, quite correct to say, that God might have fully forgiven us our sins, without adopting us as His sons; for, as a loss of our sonship

was a part of the penalty of sin, we do not see how sin could be properly forgiven, unless our sonship was restored. This then is the fact to which the witness is borne—that we, who in Christ believe, 'are the children of God.' Unparalleled condescension on His part! Inestimable privilege to be enjoyed by us! 'If children, then heirs; heirs of God;' entitled, amidst all our dangers, perplexities, and troubles, to His protection, guidance, and consolation; to constant access to Him *here*, and to those glories in His kingdom above, on which no mortal eye has gazed, which no human tongue can describe, and which no finite mind can conceive. But the sons of God have not only a title to His possessions, but to Himself. They shall inherit Him in the fulness of His perfections. He shall be their portion, their inheritance, their glory, their happiness throughout the ages of eternity. 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. And it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.'

4. *The characteristics of the witness itself.* From the remarks already made, some of you will perhaps perceive that by 'the witness of the Spirit' is meant an impression which the Holy Ghost makes on the soul of the person who believes in Christ, conveying to him an assurance, an instant persuasion, that his sins are pardoned, and that he is now a child of God. The precise *manner* in which this is done we pretend not to explain. We understand not the *mode* of any of His operations; and our Lord warns us not to expect it. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' A fact may be certain, while the *manner* in which it takes place may, from its very nature, be inexplicably mysterious. There are, however, characteristic marks by which the Spirit's witness may be distinguished.

(1). *It is an inward witness.* The Spirit is put *within* us, is sent *into our hearts*, witnesseth *to our spirit*. He does not bear His testimony to our *bodily senses* by an audible voice, or by a scenic representation; nor in the *passions*, nor on the *imaginative faculty;* for then it would necessarily be uncertain and transitory. The Being who gives the testimony, and the being who receives it, are physically the same. Spirit speaks to spirit. An Infinite Intelligence communicates to a finite intelligence. So that the important business can be transacted, and yet there may be nothing palpable to the senses of the body. One of you might receive the Spirit of adoption while listening to the word this morning; might be assured by the Holy Ghost that your sins are pardoned, and that your name is registered in heaven; and yet the glad tidings might be known to no one but yourself: those by whom you are

surrounded, who are sitting with you in the same pew, may be entirely ignorant of the spiritual transaction that has taken place between God and your soul. They have heard nothing; they have seen nothing; they, perhaps, have felt nothing.

(2). *It is a direct witness.* Not the result of reflection and argumentation. It is not that evidence which arises from perceiving an agreement between our feelings and conduct and the character and experience of a believer as stated in the Scriptures. This is evidently the witness of our own spirit, or what St. Paul calls 'the testimony of our conscience,' 2 Cor. i. 12. And the inference we draw, as to our being in the favour of God, must depend on the correctness of the views we entertain of the marks and features by which the children of God are said to be distinguished; for if we mistake here, or if we fail in making a just comparison, our judgment cannot be true. The Scriptures plainly and frequently speak of the Holy Spirit 'dwelling in the hearts of believers.' And is it reasonable to suppose, that He would take up His abode in our hearts, and yet refer us to the written word for our primary evidence of His inward residence? 'Will He conceal those beams which always shine by innate lustre, that He may manifest Himself to us through a medium which, without His light, is a dead letter? Will the Sun of Righteousness rise and shine on our hearts, and yet direct us to behold His glory reflected from a mirror?' If the Spirit is given to us, 'that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God,' He must afford a direct witness of His existence in the heart, by the evidence which He communicates. But the apostle, by very striking language, distinguishes the Spirit's witness from all inferential conclusions: he says, 'The SPIRIT *itself* beareth witness.' Now were I to say, 'Mr. B. *himself* bore witness in the court last week that C. D. was the son of E. D.:' what would you understand by these expressions? Would you suppose that he did it by a letter, or by his servant, or by any intermediate means whatever? And can you imagine that the apostle would have used the phrase, 'The Spirit *itself* beareth witness,' if he only meant to say, that the Spirit has given us the character of 'the children of God' in the Bible; and that, if we compare ourselves with it, we shall be able to ascertain whether or not we belong to His family? Again: 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' Here, also, it appears that the communication made is *immediate* and *direct.* The SPIRIT tells us that God is our Father. He cries in our hearts, 'Abba, Father,' the moment He enters, antecedent to any reflection on our character. 'The Spirit itself,' says Mr. Wesley, 'bore witness to my spirit, that I was a child of God, gave me an *evidence* hereof, and I immediately cried, "Abba, Father!" And

this I did (and so did you) before I reflected on, or was conscious of, any fruit of the Spirit. It was from this testimony received, that love, joy, peace, and the whole fruit of the Spirit flowed. First, I heard

> "Thy sins are forgiven, accepted thou art!
> I listen'd, and heaven sprung up in my heart."'

I cannot withhold from you the following judicious observations of one who was 'a faithful imitator of the venerable founder of Methodism, and an example to all his brethren.'* 'This,' says Dr. Clarke, 'is a matter of such solemn importance to every Christian soul, that God in His mercy has been pleased not to leave it to *conjecture*, *assumption*, or *inductive reasoning;* but attests it by His own Spirit in the soul of the person whom He adopts through Christ Jesus. It is the grand and most observable case in which the intercourse is kept up between heaven and earth; and the genuine believer in Christ Jesus is not left to the quibbles or casuistry of polemic divines or critics, but receives the thing, and the testimony of it, immediately from God Himself. And were not the testimony of the state thus given, no man could possibly have any assurance of his salvation which would beget confidence and love. If to any man his acceptance with God be hypothetical, then his confidence must be so too: his love to God must be hypothetical, his gratitude hypothetical, and his obedience also. IF God had forgiven me my sins, then I *should* love Him, and I *should* be grateful, and I *should* testify this gratitude by obedience. But who does not see that these must necessarily depend on the IF in the first case? All this *uncertainty*, and the perplexities resulting from it, God has precluded by sending the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, by which we cry, "Abba, Father;" and thus our adoption into the heavenly family is testified and ascertained to us in the only way in which it can possibly be done,—by the *direct* influence of the Spirit of God. Remove this from Christianity and it is a dead letter.'

(3.) *It is a satisfactory witness.* The person who receives it is sensible of it. It puts his doubts to flight, and fully assures him of his acceptance with God. 'Being justified by faith,' 'the love of God'—that is, God's love to him in justifying him—'is shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghost given unto him.' Though he has heard no voice, and seen no vision, yet he is as fully satisfied that he is a child of God, as if he had been permitted to look into 'the book of life,' and had found his

* See an invaluable chapter on the Holy Spirit, in a volume published entitled, 'Christian Theology, by Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.A.S., &c., selected from his published and unpublished writings and systematically arranged. With a Life of the Author, by Samuel Dunn.'

name written there ; or as if an angel had come from the courts above to inform him of it ; or as if Jehovah Himself had proclaimed from the excellent glory, mentioning his very name, 'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy sins as a cloud, and thy iniquities as a thick cloud.' For while the assurance is present to his heart, he can no more doubt of it 'than he can doubt of the shining of the sun, while he is standing in the full blaze of his beams.' We are ready to grant, that many mistake their own presumptuous persuasions, the ebullitions of their heated imaginations, and the suggestions of Satan, for the witness of God's Spirit ; but we very much doubt if any man mistakes the Spirit's testimony, when it is given, for any of these. We think that when He speaks, He will take care, as certainly He must be *able* to do, that the person shall know *who* it is that bears witness, and *to what* the witness is borne ; otherwise He speaks to no purpose. As Christ, when on earth, *assured* the man that was sick of the palsy that his sins were pardoned ; so now the Holy Spirit, the Representative of Christ, gives a *satisfactory evidence* when he speaks to the heart of him who believes in Jesus : 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' The Spirit bears witness to Himself. He shines upon His own work, and shows that He is from above by His own light ; a light as clear and convincing to the understanding, as any demonstration that was ever presented to it. And how is this *confirmed* by the experience of the saints? Dr. Clarke tells us, that the moment he believed in Jesus 'a glow of happiness seemed to thrill through his whole frame ; all guilt and condemnation were gone. He examined his conscience, and found it no longer a register of sins against God. He looked to heaven, and all was sunshine ; he searched for his distress, but could not find it. He felt indescribably happy ; sat down upon the ridge in the field where he had been working, full of ineffable delight. He could now draw nigh to God with more confidence than he ever could to his earthly father : he had *freedom of access*, and he had *freedom of speech*. He was like a person who had got into a new world, and could no more have doubted of his being a child of God, so clear and full was the Spirit's witness, than he could have doubted of the reality of his existence or the identity of his person.' And when the amiable poet Cowper received the Spirit of adoption, so satisfactory was the evidence, that he observes : 'Unless the Almighty Arm had been under me, I think I should have been overwhelmed with gratitude and joy. My eyes filled with tears, and my voice choked with transport. I could only look up to heaven in silent fear, overwhelmed with love and wonder. But the work of the Holy Spirit is best described in His own words : "It is joy unspeakable and full of glory."' Yes, when the Lord 'lifts up the light of His countenance upon us,' the

gladness He puts into our hearts no thought can reach, no tongue declare. May *you* realise, in your individual experience, the following delightful sentiments of 'the sweet singer' of our Israel!

'My *peace*, my *life*, my *comfort* Thou,
My treasure and my all Thou art!
True witness of my sonship, now
Engraving pardon on my heart;
Seal of my sins in Christ forgiven,
Earnest of love and *pledge* of heaven.'

(4.) *It is an abiding witness.* The Spirit does not come into the heart, and utter the cry of 'Abba, Father,' bear testimony that you are the children of God, and then take His departure. If indeed you 'quench' or 'resist' Him; which may be done by unprofitable conversation, by whispering, backbiting, talebearing, slandering, reviling; by the indulgence of unholy passions, of envy, jealousy, wrath, revenge, pride, covetousness, uncharitableness; or by the practice of cruelty, oppression, injustice, gluttony, drunkenness, uncleanness; if you suffer any lusts of the flesh to gain the ascendancy over you; the Heavenly Dove will fly out of your hearts; and then you will have no power to utter His cry. The good Spirit, being 'grieved,' has departed, and the cry is lost; and by no volition of the will, by no cogitation of the mind, by no power of the imagination, can you restore it. Were you to utter the words with your lips, your hearts would disown them. 'It is the glory of this grace, that no man can command this *cry*, and none can *assume* it. Where it *is*, it is the faithful and true witness; where *it is not*, all is uncertainty and doubt. But if, when the Spirit is sent into your heart, you continue to hearken to His voice, to follow His dictates, to nourish His influences, and diligently to cultivate all His graces;—if you 'sing in the Spirit,' and 'pray in the Spirit;' 'walk in the Spirit,' and 'live in the Spirit;'—the 'Comforter will *abide with you for ever*.' The witness will be continued; the light and life, the conviction and cry, will be maintained. He will never leave you, never forsake you; but will safely guide you through the wilderness, and fully prepare you for the paradise of God.

Having made these observations by way of explanation, we shall endeavour

II. To VINDICATE THE DOCTRINE. And here we remark, that the direct witness of the Spirit to the fact of our adoption is

1. *Possible.* And to establish the possibility of it will be at least one step towards silencing those who oppose it. Before a person can show that the doctrine is *impossible* he must be acquainted with all those propositions which constitute universal truth; for if not, the

witness of the Spirit may be true. He must understand every passage in the Bible; if not, this doctrine may be contained in it. He must be acquainted with the experience of every Christian; if not, there may be one that enjoys this inestimable privilege. He must be able perfectly to comprehend all the operations of an infinite Spirit; if not, that Spirit may give to the believer a direct assurance that he is a child of God. But this 'knowledge is too wonderful for man; it is high, he cannot attain unto it.' We therefore conclude that *the doctrine can never be proved to be impossible.* Again: If Satan can gain access to our minds, and communicate evil thoughts; surely the Holy Spirit has equal access, and can, by His attestation, seal the pardon on the believing soul. Again: If we can communicate our thoughts to each other, by words, looks, tones, and gestures; may not a spirit communicate information to a spirit, without any outward signs whatever? If we can engage in prayer, send our petitions to heaven, and hold communion with God, without uttering a single word, or using any external token; cannot GOD send down the answers, and reveal His will to us, without either voice or sign? Once more: If the Spirit made such impressions on the minds of the prophets, as to give them a deep and clear idea of that which He intended to make known to them ('for holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost'); cannot the same Spirit now bear witness to our spirit, that we are the children of God? The thing is not impossible.

We observe in the next place that it is

2. *Probable.* Is it not probable that when God actually adopts a person into His family, He will assure Him of the interesting fact? Many who deny the direct witness of the Spirit to the fact of our adoption allow the existence of such a witness in the matter of our conviction; they admit that it is 'the Spirit' that shines into the mind, and convinces of sin; that He strikes and breaks the adamantine heart in pieces; sheds His powerful rays on the frozen soul, and melts it into tears of penitential sorrow. Sinner, I appeal to thee: Has not the Holy Spirit borne witness to thy spirit, times without number, —in the house of God,—in thy own house,—when walking the streets, — or when surrounded by thy trifling companions, that thou wast a sinner, and in danger of hell-fire? Has He not directly, clearly, and distinctly witnessed to these awful truths, spoken in a language which you could not but understand? We think there is not one among you, but who, if honest, must answer in the affirmative. It is His office 'to convince the *world* of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.' Now our argument is this: If the Holy Spirit make an impression on a person's mind to awaken him to a sense of his danger, it

is reasonable to suppose, that, when the individual is forgiven, the Spirit will also assure him that his liability to that danger is removed; that if He testify to a man that God is angry with him, when that anger is turned away He will assure him of the Divine favour; that if He wound He will also heal. If God blot out our iniquities, it is probable that He will not keep us in the dark, or in a state of suspense, merely hoping that they are, or wishing that they were, blotted out, but that He will fully assure us of it; that if He bestow the greater blessing, He will not withhold the less; that if the Spirit be a spirit of bondage to fear, He will become 'the Spirit of adoption,' whereby we shall cry, 'Abba, Father.'

But we observe, thirdly, that it is

3. *Certain.* It is expressly taught in the Holy Scriptures. We do contend that such passages as the text, and, 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father,' can receive no reasonable interpretation if this doctrine be denied;—we contend that they lose all their force, because they lose all their meaning. But such passages do not stand alone: all those which speak of a manifestation of God and of Christ in the souls of believers imply the doctrine; such as 'Ye shall *know* that I am in the Father, and you in Me, and I in you.' 'It pleased God to reveal His Son in Me.' 'We have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may *know* the things that are freely given to us of God.' The following phraseology is employed for the same purpose: 'God hath *sealed* us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.' 'After that ye believed, ye were *sealed* with the Holy Spirit of promise.' And we think that all those Scripture characters who speak with such certainty of their personal acceptance with God must have enjoyed this witness. It is said of Abel, that he 'obtained witness that he was righteous:' of Enoch, that 'he had the testimony that he pleased God.' Job could say, 'I *know* that my Redeemer liveth,—and that in my flesh *I* shall see God.' David knew that God had 'forgiven' him 'all his iniquities.' The believers of the New Testament also unite in testifying, 'We have redemption in His blood, the forgiveness of our sins. He hath accepted us in the Beloved.' Now surely no one will doubt but that we who live under 'the dispensation of the Spirit' have good reasons for expecting as clear an evidence of our acceptance with God as those possessed who lived under the patriarchal or the Levitical economy. And there is certainly no ground for supposing that the privileges of Christians have been circumscribed since the days of the apostles. The *experience* of hundreds and thousands of the 'excellent of the earth' might be adduced in *confirmation* of this doctrine; while the testimony of some of the most able divines of former days will show that the view which

we have given is not novel, and that we have no need to be ashamed of the company in which we are found.

Calvin states, that 'our own mind of itself, independent of the preceding testimony of the Spirit, could not produce this persuasion—that we are the sons of God.'

Bishop Andrews observes, that 'the Spirit puts His *teste;* and that if we have this *teste* we may go our way in peace.'

'The Spirit which God hath given us,' says Hooker, 'is to *assure* us that we are the sons of God.'

'It is one great office of the Holy Spirit,' remarks Bishop Brownrigg, 'to ratify and seal up to us the forgiveness of sin.'

Bishop Pearson remarks, 'It is the office of the Holy Ghost to *assure* us of the adoption of sons, to create in us a sense of the paternal love of God, and to give us an earnest of our everlasting inheritance.'

Archbishop Usher says, 'The Spirit of adoption is, first, a *witness;* second, a seal; third, the pledge and earnest of our inheritance, setting a holy security on the soul, whereby it rejoiceth, even in affliction, in hope of glory.'

Dr. Isaac Barrow declares, 'This is that Spirit of adoption which constituteth us the sons of God; certifying us that we are so, and causing us by a free instinct to cry, "Abba, Father."'

Case observes, 'Another office of the Spirit is that which our divines call *immediate*, and it is a bright irradiation of the HOLY GHOST, beaming out upon the soul, not only giving it a clear and distinct discerning of its own graces, but *immediately witnessing to the soul its adoption by* JESUS CHRIST, and *right and title to the kingdom of* GOD, wherein God speaks to the soul in some such language as this, "I am thy salvation: I have blotted out thy transgressions: thy sins are forgiven thee."'

'The Spirit,' says Caryll, 'gives a distinct witness of His own, which is His *immediate* work; and is, in a way of peculiarity and transcendency, called the witness of the Spirit.'

Old Samuel Clarke declares, that 'the Spirit of God, without consideration of, or reflecting upon, any of those gracious qualifications He hath wrought in the soul, does, by His own *immediate* power, *imprint* this persuasion upon the heart, "Thou art a child of God;" and by an inward and secret (yet powerful) voice, doth say to the soul, "Thou art a believer, thy sins are pardoned."'

Matthew Poole adds, "The Spirit of adoption doth by an inward and secret suggestion raise our hearts to this persuasion, that God is our Father, and we are His children. This is not the testimony of the graces and operations of the Spirit, but of the Spirit itself."

'The Spirit,' says Dr. John Owen, 'worketh joy in the hearts of

believers *immediately* by Himself, *without the consideration of any other acts or works of His*, or the interpositions of any reasonings, or deductions, or conclusions. This does not arise from our reflex consideration of the love of God, but rather gives occasion thereunto."

Dr. Watts is equally explicit: 'There is an extraordinary witness of the Spirit; and that is, when, in an *immediate* and powerful manner, the Holy Spirit *impresses* the soul with an assurance of Divine love, and gives the heart of a saint such a full discovery of His adoption, without the more slow and argumentative method of comparing the dispositions of their souls with some special characters of the children of God in Scripture.'

These extracts will suffice to show that *we* have been preaching no *new doctrine*, but only reviving an *old one*.

We observe, lastly, that the witness of the Spirit is

4. *Necessary*. It is necessary, for instance, to your comfort. Even supposing that your sins were pardoned, yet if you knew it not, though your state might be a safe one, it would not be a comfortable one. Many who deny the direct witness of the Spirit say that they provide for the comfort of believers in an equally safe and effectual way. We, however, think not; and we think that facts are against them. As far as we have had intercourse with such, and from what we gather from their biography, they do not enjoy that full assurance of their present acceptance with God, and that degree of Christian comfort which the Scriptures hold out as the privilege of true believers. If you compare the memoirs in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* with those where this doctrine is denied, you must perceive a very marked difference in the experience of the subjects of them. The fact, then, that those who give up this truth generally speak with great uncertainty as to their being in the favour of God satisfies us that the direct witness of the Spirit is necessary; though we are ready to acknowledge that some may have enjoyed the blessing, who have not called it by the same name. We do not see in what other way a person can be assured of his adoption. A conviction which he may have of his *sincerity* is no proof of it. 'What are you afraid of, doctor?' said a lady to our great lexicographer. 'Madam,' he replied, 'I am afraid of going to hell.' 'Well, but, doctor,' the lady answered, 'do not you know that God is merciful?' 'Yes, madam,' said he, 'I know He is; but that God has told me, that He will place some on the right hand, and some on the left; and I do not *know* but He will place *me* on His left hand.' Dr. Johnson was sincere when he thus spoke; but, not having then received the Spirit of adoption, no reflection on his sincerity could give him an assurance of a part in the first resurrection. Repentance is no proof of pardon; for it supposes that the person is still

in a state of condemnation. Faith is no proof of it; 'for there are many degrees of faith, and it is nowhere asserted that when it has reached some definite degree, clearly pointed out, forgiveness takes place: so that no one is authorised to *conclude*, that when he has exercised faith, it has certainly secured pardon; for pardon is a secret act that passes in the mind of God, which could never be known if He were not pleased to reveal it. Man is not made the judge of the fact; for 'the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.' Again: As repentance and faith are exercised *in order to* pardon, they cannot be the evidence of it. But it is asked, 'Are not the *fruits* of the Spirit sufficient evidence of adoption?' We reply that you may as well expect light without the sun, or heat without fire, as the fruits of the Spirit where the Spirit of adoption is not to produce them. All the other witnesses of our adoption are the effects of the direct witness of the Spirit. If we 'love God,' it is because we *know* that He has first 'loved us.' If we have 'peace with God,' it is because we are 'justified by faith.' If we have 'joy in God,' it is because we have 'received the atonement.' But if these fruits are the medium by which we ascertain the fact of our forgiveness and adoption, we must be supposed to love God, while as yet we feel His wrath abiding upon us; to have peace, and to rejoice, before we know that our liability to hell is taken away. This, however, is impossible; so that before we can have love, peace and joy, our pardon must be manifested, directly and immediately, by the Holy Ghost. No consideration of the *general love* of God to the human race, in the gift of His Son, can produce these graces. We must know Him as OUR God reconciled to *us*, must be persuaded of our own *personal and individual* interest in His pardoning and adopting love, before we can exercise the love which He requires. Mr. Wesley here observes, with his usual beauty, brevity, and force: 'We must be holy before we can be conscious that we are so; we must love God before we can be holy at all, this being the root of all holiness; we cannot love God till we know He loves us, and we cannot know His pardoning love to us till His Spirit witnesses to our spirit.' Hence we add, that this witness is necessary *to our advancement in holiness.* We are not likely to be diligent in seeking a *meetness* for heaven before we know that we have a *title* to it; but in proportion to the clearness with which we can read our title to mansions in the skies will be our anxiety to secure a preparation. 'Every one that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as He is pure.' But this hope cannot exist if we know not that we are 'the sons of God;' and consequently the purity produced by its influence cannot be experienced. Not one of the duties which the children of God owe to their heavenly Father can be discharged by you, if you have no evidence of your adoption. You can exercise no childlike

confidence, can indulge no childlike fear, can render no childlike submission, can maintain no childlike intercourse; in a word, you can neither love nor obey Him as 'dear children.'

If such be the nature and importance of this privilege, allow me to ask, Do you enjoy it? 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' You cannot reply, 'We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost;' for the Comforter, 'which proceedeth from the Father and the Son,' has been preached unto you. But does He *dwell* in you? 'Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.' Say not, This is all enthusiasm, and that you will not believe it; for, whether you believe it or not, it is still true; and if you are none of His, you can have no security in time, no hope in death, no bliss in eternity. Trifle not with a subject so serious, lest that come upon you which was spoken by the prophet: 'They rebelled and vexed His Holy Spirit; therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them.'

Those of you who '*have received the spirit of bondage unto fear*,' take courage: the Comforter will come. Some of your friends, when they see your distress of soul, may tell you, that your conduct has been so consistent, and your attendance on the means of grace so regular, you must be in the Divine favour. But do not believe them; God has not authorised them to make any such communication. Others will perhaps say to you, 'Believe that you have it, and you have it.' Credit them not; they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. God has suspended your pardon and adoption on your faith. Here is sufficient encouragement: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt be saved*.' Renounce dependence on every other foundation; exclusively trust on the Saviour; cordially receive Him into your heart, and God will adopt you into His family, and 'baptize you with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.'

You who profess to enjoy the invaluable blessing, 'try the spirits whether they are of God.' If you say that you have the inward testimony of the Spirit, and are living in sin, be assured that you are deceiving your own souls; for the *witness* of God's Spirit is always *immediately* followed by the *fruit* of the Spirit, which is 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' Both the witnesses are joined, the Spirit of God and ours. Their office is distinct, but they can never be separated. If they are united in your experience, you have the strongest possible evidence that you are the children of God. Act up to the dignity of your character. Labour to bring others into the family. Herein is your Father glorified, that ye bear *much* fruit. And in proportion to your fruitfulness on earth, will be your happiness in heaven.

Now unto God the Father, our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor; unto God the Son, our Redeemer, Saviour, and Intercessor; unto God the Holy Ghost, our Testifier, Comforter, and Sanctifier; Three in One, and One in Three, be all honour and glory, throughout the ages of eternity!

SERMON IX.

THE HEAVENLY STATE.

'THESE ARE THEY WHICH CAME OUT OF GREAT TRIBULATION, AND HAVE WASHED THEIR ROBES, AND MADE THEM WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB. THEREFORE ARE THEY BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD, AND SERVE HIM DAY AND NIGHT IN HIS TEMPLE: AND HE THAT SITTETH ON THE THRONE SHALL DWELL AMONG THEM. THEY SHALL HUNGER NO MORE, NEITHER THIRST ANY MORE; NEITHER SHALL THE SUN LIGHT ON THEM, NOR ANY HEAT. FOR THE LAMB WHICH IS IN THE MIDST OF THE THRONE SHALL FEED THEM, AND SHALL LEAD THEM UNTO LIVING FOUNTAINS OF WATERS: AND GOD SHALL WIPE AWAY ALL TEARS FROM THEIR EYES.'—*Rev.* vii. 14-17.

A FEW weeks before the ever-to-be-remembered Adam Clarke quitted this probationary scene, he penned the following beautiful and touching lines:—'I have enjoyed the spring of life; I have endured the toils of summer; I have culled the fruits of autumn; I am passing through the rigours of winter; and am neither forsaken of God, nor abandoned by man. I see at no great distance the dawn of a new day, the first of a spring that shall be eternal; it is advancing to meet me; I haste to embrace it. Welcome! welcome! eternal spring! Hallelujah!' Happy, thrice happy, they, who descend into the darkness and chill of death, animated by so bright a prospect of an eternal spring! There are but few in this assembly who have not been called to suffer the loss of friends and relatives by the cold hand of death. You surrounded their dying pillow, listened to their last advice, saw their last look, heard their last sigh, followed them to the very verge;—the curtain dropped,—and they have not returned to give you any information of the country into which they entered. Still the questions will return, Where are they gone? How are they now employed? The Bible furnishes the answers. Not one spirit is extinguished. Each is still conscious of its existence; and is either miserable or happy, according as it departed in sin, or in the Lord. If their departure was without any evidence of pardon and purity, we wonder not that you cannot speak of it, that you cannot think of it;

that the mind shrinks back from the contemplation with a shuddering recoil. But if, while on earth, they sustained the Christian character, pursued the Christian course, and departed resting on the atoning sacrifice you may meditate on their exit with joy.

> 'With songs let us follow their flight,
> And mount with their spirits above.'

The text informs us, that they are,—what they are,—where they are,—with whom they are,—and how they are employed. In a word, that they are in heaven. The subject, therefore, to which I would direct your attention is, the adaptation of heaven to the nature, capacities, and necessities of human beings. It will be found suitable to us—

I. As Corporeal Beings. We perceive objects, obtain information, receive impressions, and derive pleasure and pain through the medium of our senses. Outward circumstances deeply affect us. Our enjoyments are increased or diminished by the scenes through which we pass; and, from the text and other parts of Scripture, it appears, that the happiness of heaven will, in part, consist in pleasurable sensations. Not such as Mohammed prepared for his deluded votaries, in his paradise of mirth and sensuality; but, as corporeal sufferings will form a part of the punishment of the ungodly, so the bliss of the righteous will consist in certain exquisite sensations of delight, produced by external objects acting upon our sentient nature. Man is a compound being; the Lord God formed him of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. The soul is admirably adapted by its energy and sympathy to be the director of the body's operations; and the body is equally adapted to be the organ and instrument of the soul. Both will be in heaven; and from their close connection and mutual influence, the soul cannot be but pleasurably affected, according to the various delightful impressions of external objects upon the body in which it resides.

A particular is mentioned in the text that distinguishes the saints from all the other inhabitants of heaven. Once they were *sufferers* on earth. 'These are they which came out of great tribulation.' They had been encompassed about with infirmities; had dwelt in frail tabernacles, liable to a thousand accidents, innumerable diseases, and acute pains, which often interrupted their mental exercise, tinged the surrounding objects, and rendered life a burden. Some of them were once the subjects of cold poverty, perplexed by pecuniary embarrassments, cumbered with many things, constantly struggling against want. Some were persecuted for righteousness' sake; their motives were suspected

principles misnamed, and actions misrepresented. Their friends forsook them, and their enemies traduced them. The tongue of slander and the arm of oppression were employed against them. They were betrayed by those in whom they reposed confidence, and repaid with ingratitude by those whom they had disinterestedly served. Of their good name, their property, their liberty, they were deprived. They had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and in caves of the earth. They had also, during their probation, to contend with principalities and powers, with spiritual wickedness in high places. Satan attacked them as a roaring lion, a cunning serpent, or as an angel of light, and they were in heaviness through manifold temptations. Others had to endure the bereavement of those who were nearest and dearest unto them: death cut off the desire of their eyes with a stroke, or snatched their first-born from their embrace, and nature, unreproved, then dropped a tear. They were all exposed to a thousand inconveniences, vexations, disappointments, shocks, that flesh is heir to; and had to pass the swellings of Jordan, before they entered the heavenly Canaan. But there they are. 'They have come out of great tribulation.' Take, for a moment, this negative view of heaven. There will be the entire exclusion of sorrow, pain, and want. Of tribulation the inhabitants have taken a final farewell. The numerous, powerful, subtle and malignant enemies, with which they long contended, they shall see no more for ever. Their bodies shall be perfectly freed from all tendency to disease, deformity, decay, dissolution, and corruption. 'They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.' Their reproach shall be taken away; the wicked shall cease from troubling. Over the battlements of that city, Satan shall never be able to shoot a dart. The inhabitants will sing, Salvation to our God; for the accuser of the brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. These afflicting expressions of distress are not witnessed in heaven, for all the causes of sorrow are for ever removed. There is nothing to lament; no tumult, or suspense, or fear; no disappointment, or discontent, or reproach; no more curse.

Christ suffered, and then entered into glory. For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross and despised the shame. The disciples

are conformed unto their Lord. They once suffered, they now reign. The height of their happiness is increased by the depth of the tribulation out of which they have come. They now rest from their labours: and how sweet is rest after toil! They have outrode the tempest: and how pleasant is a calm after a storm! They have fought the good fight: and how delightful is peace after a dangerous warfare! There is no night; but sacred, high, eternal noon. The sky is darkened by no cloud, the air ruffled by no storm, the bosom wrung with no pang, the heart corroded with no anguish, the cheek moistened with no tear.

This is not all. There is not only a continuation of being from which all these evils are excluded; but positive, perfect happiness. The body will not only be free from disease and pain, but it will yield to the spirit the most exquisite sensations of delight. There will be the thrilling joys of our organic nature, without any of its odious lusts. The most ravishing beauties which the eye now beholds, the most delightful entertainments provided for the ear, all the treasures of external gratification with which this world is stored, fall infinitely short, give us no adequate conception, of those sources of pleasure with which heaven is furnished. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love Him. That region must be suited to man's various capacities, where everything smiles in 'Eden's first bloom.' Listen to the description given of it in the Revelation. 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. To him will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne. The Lamb shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water.'

There is here an allusion to the original residence of man. And that paradise was peculiarly suited to human nature. The serenity of its sky and the splendour of its sun, the life which breathed in its winds and flowed in its rivers, the verdure with which it was arrayed, the flowers with which it was adorned, and the fruits which it yielded. But the name is transferred to heaven; it is one of the appropriate designations of the future abode of the redeemed, where they will find a congenial atmosphere, and acquire a native growth. To them, its beauty, and fragrance, and enjoyments will be specially adapted. The scenery will delight the eye, without wearying it; the music will charm the ear, without stunning it; the fruit will gratify the taste, without cloying it. Here, of whatever we partake, the appetite is soon sated and palled; we reject what we desired, we loathe what we loved. But there the secret will be discovered of pleasure rising with its means, and the possibility of enjoyment, through all its additions. There will be a constant

longing, an exhaustless supply, and an unabating zest. While the saints will have the enjoyment of inward self-satisfaction, happiness will surround them. They will dwell in the midst of what is lovely, glorious, and delightful. Every want will be supplied, every vacuity filled, every wish met, every desire gratified. Then shall be heard the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And He who once poured water into a basin and washed His disciples' feet, and wiped them with the towel wherewith He was girded, will, with a condescension that will fill all heaven with amazement, 'gird Himself, and come forth to serve them.' The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them. And He will not fail to provide everything suitable for them. If He be their Shepherd, they shall not want. He will feed them in green pastures, and lead them to living fountains of water. He will open to them endless sources of happiness, and an infinite variety of enjoyment.

Heaven is suited to us—

II. As Moral Beings. However healthy and perfect the organic nature, however lovely and magnificent the external scene, there could be no happiness so long as the mind was the seat of evil principles, and the heart of unhallowed passions. The miser is not happy, though he may have heaped up gold as the dust. The voluptuary is not happy, though he may have abundant means of sensual gratification. The ambitious man is not happy, though he may stand on the pinnacle of fame. And why? Because they are unholy. The saints are holy, and therefore happy. 'They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

Observe, the white robes with which they are adorned cannot mean the personal, imputed righteousness of Christ. It needed no washing: their robes did. It could not be washed by the saints; their robes were. We are expressly told that the fine linen, clean and white, is the righteousness of the saints. But how did they obtain it? They were once not only sufferers, but sinners. Guilty, deeply guilty; depraved, totally depraved. Criminals who had forfeited their lives, and were falling under the dread penalty, everlasting death. The justice, holiness, and faithfulness of God required satisfaction. They, atonement for themselves or offering meet, indebted and undone, had none to bring. By no power, price, or wisdom could they effect their own redemption. Christ redeemed them. He was the Lamb of God. The Lamb which all the ancient sacrifices of God's appointment prefigured. The Lamb which

God provided, to whose death He consented and conspired, and whose sacrifice He accepted. The 'blood' of the Lamb was the ransom price. The song of the redeemed is,—Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood. Not by Thy innocency, or by Thy teaching, or by an act of mere prerogative; but, by Thy 'blood.' He grants, not a gratuitous liberation, without a consideration, but has paid the redemption price: not silver and gold, but His own precious blood.

Those who are now in white robes first discovered, and felt, and confessed, and loathed their pollution; trusted on the infinitely meritorious sacrifice, plunged by faith into the fountain open for sin and for uncleanness, and took refuge under the hallowed shade of the cross. God for Christ's sake forgave their sins. In the blood divine they found redemption: became the subjects of redemption by power, as well as by price; actual, as well as virtual. The guilt of sin was cancelled, its power broken, its love destroyed, its pollution cleansed, before they were redeemed from the earth.' But, while here, their graces were feeble; their righteous souls were vexed with the filthy conversation and unlawful deeds of sinners. They were in danger of being contaminated and of falling into ruin. For while in time, they were on probation, and probation necessarily supposes the possibility of change. Scripture exhortations, cautions, admonitions, and examples prove this. But in heaven there is nothing that defileth, nothing that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie. Each one walketh in his uprightness. There are no evil examples, no possibility of sin,—sin can never enter there. The redeemed cannot forsake the fountain of living waters, crucify the Son of God afresh, or quench the operations of the Holy Spirit. Their graces are in a state of maturity. The moral feelings all combine in the most unsullied purity, are wrought up to the highest pitch of intensity, move in sweetest harmony, and flow towards their proper object. Love to God, pure, perfect, and perpetual, sits enthroned in their every breast, and fills them with all the ecstasy of an overwhelming affection. Everything that displays His character, and promotes His glory, engages their attention, excites their admiration, and kindles their joy. Every disclosure of purpose, every manifestation of a perfection, is a new occasion and source of their bliss. Where there is such purity there must be happiness. The city so holy and clean, no sorrow can breathe in the air.

From this part of our subject we think two doctrines are plainly deducible: the doctrine of Original Sin, and of the Atonement by the blood of Christ. As all the saints in heaven had washed their robes, they must have been previously polluted. If all were polluted, it must have been by hereditary depravity. Had sin been only the effect of a bad education or bad example, some, doubtless, would have escaped the

taint. Those who died in infancy certainly would. All were washed, because all had been corrupted, and this could not have taken place but by original sin. We are also here informed what effected their purification. They have been cleansed; not by the waters of baptism, by Church membership, by ceremonial observances, by bodily austerities, by the blood of the martyrs, by the purgatory of the *papists;*—but by the '*blood of the Lamb.*' This is the only sacrifice for sin, the only fountain for uncleanness; to it, and to it only, all the saints in glory ascribe their redemption. Is not the conclusion inevitable? There cannot be a Socinian among them.

Heaven is suited to men—

III. As Intellectual Beings. There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding. God hath taught us more than the beasts of the earth, and made us wiser than the fowls of heaven. We are endowed with a capacity for acquiring, appreciating, and relishing truth. The pleasures of the mind, enjoyments which arise from the apprehension of truth, vastly exceed all sensual gratifications. Exquisite must have been the delight of Archimedes, when, on making a discovery in a bath, he ran out naked, exclaiming, I have found it! I have found it! But now we see through a glass darkly; we know but in part. Sin has darkened and enfeebled our mental faculties, and greatly limited their operation; disordered passions, unreasonable prejudices, diversified opinions, and the time required for business, food and sleep, render our progress in the pursuit of knowledge exceedingly tardy. It is obtained with difficulty. Much study is a weariness to the flesh, Often, in spite of all that is intense in application and profound in investigation, we are disappointed, bewildered, and in wandering mazes lost. Our knowledge is superficial, confused, doubtful, narrow, and soon lost by infirmities, or by the defects of memory.

The saints in heaven know even as they are known. They are in the place of glorious vision,—'before the throne.' God is an infinite Being. In the minutest point of space He subsists in an infinite fulness; beyond the bounds of creation He fills an unmeasured solitude with the plenitude of His power and consciousness; but as all creatures are finite, He gives a local display of His glory. He hath set His throne in the heavens; there He sits in visible magnificence, amidst myriads of intelligences actuating whatever is vital, educing whatever is harmonious, filling, sanctifying, and beautifying all with His presence and glory. By the clear, strong, and steady light of that throne, and with organs of vision equal to the splendour, the redeemed look at every object presented for contemplation. 'When that which is perfect is come, then that which

is in part shall be done away.' In heaven all our present defects and obstacles in the path of knowledge shall be removed. When the soul is disengaged from the body of flesh and blood, and united to a spiritual body, it will be assisted by it, rather than, as now, obstructed in the pursuit of truth; and when the heart is perfectly delivered from every earthly motion, the mind will be unfettered in its search of knowledge. Objects are not seen through an obscuring medium by the saints in heaven. 'They are not now shadowed glimmerings, transient oblique glances, but the direct beams of full-eyed glory, that shine upon them.' They have entered the divine shekinah, the chamber of the presence of the great King, the habitation of His holiness and glory, the place where His honour dwelleth; His glory surrounds them with encircling beams, they are beset with glory, therefore, surely filled with joy. The veil is drawn aside, or they are within the veil. With these advantages how perfect must be their knowledge! As with the force of instinct and the facility of intuition they acquire ideas. The scenes of nature in all their loveliness and splendour are spread out before them: and of the laws by which the material creation is governed they know a thousand times more than the wisest philosopher on earth. The events of Providence which once appeared opposing, conflicting, discordant, mysterious, are now seen to have been so many links of one unbroken chain, and to have worked together for their good. And what enrapturing views have they of God!—of His infinite and glorious perfections, of the truths of His word, and especially of the great remedial scheme, which outshines every other subject and object with its own unborrowed splendour, and throws a glory on everything besides. All difficulties will be removed, all questions solved, all apparent contradictions reconciled, all the mists of error and ignorance dispersed; and the light will be pleasant:—

> 'But speak, ye happy spirits, that surround
> The dazzling throne, for ye alone can tell
> The wonders of the beatific sight,
> When from the bright unclouded face of God
> You drink full draughts of bliss and endless love,
> And plunge yourselves in life's immortal fount.'

Heaven is suited to us—

IV. As Social Beings. We are formed for society. In solitude we should pine and languish. But on earth the pleasures of friendship are greatly abated by the imperfections we discover in our friends, and lament in ourselves. In heaven all will be lovely, wise, pure, and happy. Not an envious, jealous, malicious, selfish, uncharitable member will be found in that society. No weakness will be discovered. No disagree-

ment in opinion will exist. No dissensions will arise to interrupt the perpetual harmony. A cold heart will never there be concealed under fulsome compliments; nor secret animosity under the caresses of dissembled love. The voice of discord will never ascend, the whisper of suspicion will never circulate. There no competitors struggle; no rivals supplant each other. There is nothing in any inhabitant offensive, nothing but what the rest must approve. Each, happy in himself, enjoys the happiness of the rest, and by reciprocal communications of affection, at once receives from, and adds to, the general stock of happiness. The society in heaven will be numerous. God will bring many sons unto glory. There will be an innumerable company. And what a variety! John says in the context: 'I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne.' Persons of every clime, and colour, and configuration. Polished Europeans, superstitious Asiatics, degraded Africans, wild Americans, and tribes of once savage islanders. Those who on earth were members of different Churches, possessed different talents, followed different professions, were found in different circumstances, and terminated life at different ages, are now—before the throne. And are there not the strongest presumptive evidences of mutual recognition in heaven; that our pious friendships will there be renewed and perpetuated? Such has been the expectation of mankind in all ages. Memory, with the other faculties, will be strengthened, as we pass into the other world. The proceedings of the day of judgment, and the nature of the heavenly state, seem to require this mutual recognition. The Scriptures give encouraging intimations of it. We shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Delightful thought! We shall become contemporaries with patriarchs, and be united to the glorious company of the prophets; shall enjoy the goodly fellowship of the apostles, and join the noble army of martyrs. We shall be the associates of the wise, the holy, the just, the good, from every region of the universe, with whom we shall live, and love, and learn, and worship. We adopt not the sentiment of him who said, 'Heaven would be no heaven to me without my friends.' No, we shudder at its impiety. But we do cherish the hope of being restored to the society of those who, when on earth, were as dear to us as our own souls, and with whom we took sweet counsel; but who were torn from our sanctified embrace by the cold hand of death. We shall be caught up together with them. And how joyful the emotion with which the faithful minister will meet his spiritual children! What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy.

But in heaven we shall come to an innumerable company of angels. We shall see those morning stars which sang together, and the sons of God who at the creation shouted for joy. Thrones and dominions, principalities and powers. The full-eyed cherubim, and the burning seraphim. Is there not joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? To be privileged to see, to converse, and to hold fellowship with such pure, bright intelligences will be bliss.

The glorified saints shall enjoy the company of the Lamb. To Him, as we have seen, they are entirely indebted for their salvation from sin, death, and hell. It is because He is 'in the midst of the throne,' that that throne is not covered with thick darkness, and peals not forth thunders of wrath; that there is a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. With Him the saints hold intimate, and hallowed, and delightful, and transforming, and unbroken fellowship. And what tongue can describe, what human heart can conceive, their admiration, their gratitude, their affection, their rapture, as they gaze?

'He shows His prints of love,—
They kindle to a flame!
And sound through all the worlds above,
The slaughter'd Lamb.'

But, farther, we are informed that 'He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.' The pure in heart shall see God. 'In my flesh,' says Job, 'I shall see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.' 'As for me,' David exclaims, 'I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness.' 'I heard,' observes John, 'a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.' These passages certainly teach that in heaven there is a special, visible display of God's glory, and that to Him the saints have personal approach. The moment they enter, they have an immediate consciousness of the Divine presence; they feel surrounded on every side with the great Object of their bliss; 'even as the mote that swims in the brightness of the upper skies' is encompassed with the effulgence of the sun. They burst at once into the blaze of uncreated Light, and are delightfully sensitive to its beams. They now think of Him more in His moral than in His natural attributes; and thus the apparent distance between God and them is immensely reduced. 'Instead of the mute awe which before had held them far from the Great Incomprehensible,' they now, in the relationship of children to a father, indulge an

intimate and personal affection. And what will be the impression on our souls when we see our Father face to face! when we first hear His paternal voice! when with mildness and complacency He receives us into His immediate presence! 'To stand unawed in the presence of such awful grandeur; unruffled amidst such a bright effulgence of uncreated glory as will then move around us,—unabashed under the brightest emanations of purity, will impart such a high degree of conscious dignity, that we shall feel like sons of God, whose glory is no longer concealed under the veil of humanity, but only seen and universally admired.'

Heaven is suited to us—

V. As Active Beings. Our faculties must be employed, our graces must be exercised. Were we idle we should be miserable. Adam, in innocence, was not unemployed; he was placed in the garden to dress it and to keep it. Angels are actively engaged, in contemplation, adoration, acclamation, or flight to distant worlds. Ministering to the saints is a part of their standing employment. Michael has fought our battles, Raphael sung our triumphs, and Gabriel on our errands flown. And in our text we are told, that those who have washed their robes are 'before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple.' In another part of this book, John says, 'I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.' In heaven there will be no place set apart exclusively for the honour of God; but every part of it will be filled with His presence and splendour. There will be no building to which certain religious services will be confined, and to which we could only occasionally go, and in which moral maladies are removed. Every spot will there be alike holy, and be equally fitted to the song of praise and the incense of devotion. We shall have no need to say, 'O when shall I come and appear before God?' for we shall be continually before Him; and the cure of our spiritual diseases will be complete. But, still, we shall be employed, 'day and night,'—unceasingly, with an activity which never wearies, a buoyancy which never grows languid. The employment will be suited to the strength of our glorified faculties, the extent of our capacities, and the splendour of the scenes we shall have to traverse. We shall be acquiring fresh knowledge, making new discoveries, and performing new services, perhaps in travelling to various parts of our Lord's extensive domains, and in ministering to other beings. But our chief employment will be in worshipping God; in putting forth new acts of love to Him in the sublimest workings of the mind; and in celebrating the wonders of His power, His holiness, His goodness, in varied, and sublime, and harmonious anthems of praise. And we shall sing the 'new song.' As redeemed beings, we shall give

expression to our joyful and powerful emotions,—too powerful to be confined to the heart. We shall strike our golden harps, and, in united chorus, rising higher and higher, till, with a loud voice, like the sound of many waters, we sing, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.'

Heaven is suited to us—

VI. As Immortal Beings. The value of all earthly enjoyments is greatly lessened, in consequence of the uncertain tenure by which we hold them. Riches may suddenly make to themselves wings and fly away. Honour, in a moment, by our own indiscretion, or by the tongue of slander, may pass like a shadow over a rock. Friendship may be broken by misunderstandings, or bereavements; and we have the fullest assurance that from all such enjoyments we must be separated at death. But if a man die, shall he live again? This is a question which philosophy could never answer; the eye of reason has been strained by its frequent attempts to penetrate futurity. From man's elevation in the scale of being, the properties of the soul, its high aspirations, its capacity of advancing in knowledge, its longing after immortality, its startling at destruction, the presages of conscience, and the irregularities in the administration of providence; the ancient sages thought it probable that there would be an hereafter. But their speculations could not remove their doubts, nor arm them with confidence in the view of death. At the point where reason fails revelation comes to our assistance. Life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel. He who is the 'Lord of Life,' the 'Living One,' who possesses life in all its fountain, fulness, and eternity, assures His followers that, 'because He lives, they shall live also.' Probation is terminated. They can die no more. The possibility of falling, if indulged, 'would drink up all their joy, and quite unparadise the realms of bliss.'

As the saints will live for ever, so the idea of eternity is blended with almost every view of their abode. It is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. A building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. A city that hath foundations. A kingdom that is everlasting. Perpetuity belongs to all the sources of their enjoyments. The Lamb shall lead them to living fountains of water. Fountains that shall never dry up, nor be diminished, nor lose any of their freshness. Fountains that are impregnated with life,—life in the highest and sublimest sense, life vernal and immortal. Fountains of which those who drink shall live, and not only live, but grow, and flourish, and bloom. An animating principle shall spread without

intermission through their bodies and souls, kindling the eye, playing upon the countenance, invigorating the faculties, expanding the conceptions, and glowing in the affections for ever and ever.

Such is the heaven which God hath prepared for you. One thing now remains, the preparation of you for that heaven. The latter is as necessary as the former. Then, are you prepared? Not, if you are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Not, if your hearts are cankered with envy, swelled with pride, or shrivelled with covetousness. Not, if you avoid the searching light of truth lest your errors should be exposed and your deeds of darkness made manifest. Not, if you shun the company of the sons of Zion for the gay, the dissipated, the worldly. Not, if you have a distaste to God's service, neglecting it whenever you find a pretext, and when you do engage in it are restless and careless, and glad when it is over. Not, unless you have 'washed in the blood of the Lamb.' This is the test. There is no other name given under heaven whereby you can be saved. To man the bleeding cross hath promised all. Blot it from your creed, and you are enveloped in midnight darkness. Remove from it, and you plunge into the dangerous waters. Die without an application of the blood of Christ, and you are bankrupt—beggared for eternity. But this need not be the case with any of you. Christ wept that you might smile, He died that you might never die. Do you see your danger? Is the remembrance of your sins grievous unto you? Do you desire deliverance from them? then, hear the comfortable words of the Saviour. 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' But come, sinner, as you are; guilty, depraved, wretched, helpless; and cast yourself with a sole reliance on the atoning blood. Do it now. Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. Ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? And know ye not that a prince and a great man is fallen this day in Israel? The Rev. Henry Moore is numbered with the venerable dead. A few particulars relative to the life, death, and character of this eminent servant of God cannot fail of being interesting and profitable unto you.

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SERMON X.

THE GLORIFIED BODY.*

'IT IS SOWN IN CORRUPTION, IT IS RAISED IN INCORRUPTION; IT IS SOWN IN DISHONOUR, IT IS RAISED IN GLORY; IT IS SOWN IN WEAKNESS, IT IS RAISED IN POWER; IT IS SOWN A NATURAL BODY, IT IS RAISED A SPIRITUAL BODY.'—1 *Corinthians* xv. 42, 43, 44.

THE leading subject of this chapter is the resurrection of the dead; a doctrine denied by certain individuals at Corinth, but which the apostle here establishes by a train of argumentation the most luminous, consecutive, powerful, and triumphant. He first adverts to a fact—the resurrection of Christ. This was set forth in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, by typical persons, significant actions, and verbal predictions. It was confirmed by numerous eye-witnesses. After Christ was risen, He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; after that, He was seen of James, then of all the apostles; and last of all He was seen of Paul himself. Now, if the resurrection of Christ be granted, the apostle shows the absurdity of denying the general resurrection: for if it be not possible for the dead to rise, he contends, that Christ is not risen. And if this were the case, he reminds them, that their faith in Him was vain; that the preaching of the apostles was vain; that they were found false witnesses before God; that those who had died in the faith of it had perished; and that the followers of Christ were of all men the most miserable. But as Christ is risen from the dead, as He has destroyed the destroyer, spoiled the grave, burst the barriers of the tomb, opened the iron gates of death, our resurrection will follow. He rose in our nature, as our representative. His resurrection was a proof, a pledge, an earnest of ours. He was 'the first fruits' of them that slept. Then mortality took flight, and with Him mounted from the tomb. Hence we may remark, that the resurrection will not be the result of any *vegetative process;* there is no part of the present body that will be preserved to germinate

* Preached on the occasion of the death of the late Rev. Richard Treffry.

and to be unfolded into the perfected body. The resurrection will be a miraculous work, performed by Christ. 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' His death procured our resurrection; His resurrection is the pledge of ours; and the work of rescuing us from our enemies shall be effected by 'the Lord from heaven.' It is also plain, that the *same body* will be raised again. However wondrous and glorious the changes in its qualities and form may be, the substance will be the same; one essence with refined properties; one body in two different states. If God give not the same body we once inhabited, it will not be a resurrection—a rising again—but a creation. Nor do we see the justice of creating a new body, and punishing it, when it had never sinned. We know not in what the identity of the body consists, but it will doubtless be preserved. As a man, punished for crime he committed twenty years ago, would be conscious that he was suffering in the same body as that in which he committed the crime, notwithstanding the change that had passed on it in that time, so will it be in the resurrection. Each person will be conscious that the body he enters is the same which he inhabited while on earth. We shall instantly feel ourselves at home; shall feel that our new residence is a part of ourselves. 'In my flesh shall I see God.' There are difficulties connected with the subject; that the body, after it has been reduced to dust, and that dust blown by the winds, or washed by the floods, or consumed in the fire, or transmuted into plants and animals, shall be raised again, and that a sameness shall be preserved; but He who first formed it from the dust of the earth, shall effect it. To omnipotence it is possible,—it is easy.

It should also be kept in mind that the apostle is speaking in the text exclusively of the righteous; of those who have believed in Christ, who have suffered for Christ, who have had the sting of death extracted from their souls by the blood of Christ, of those who have 'fallen asleep in Christ.' We shall now direct your attention to the *properties* of the GLORIFIED BODY; and to some *reflections* that will arise out of the subject. Perhaps we cannot do better than take up the words of the text in the order in which they stand.

The body is sown in corruption. Sown — committed to the earth like a seed, and dissolved, but not destroyed. And even its dissolution is not natural. Death was not a part of the original plan of God at the formation of the body. It did not enter into the first arrangement. God made man immortal—his body immortal as well as his soul. When its Maker pronounced it to be 'very good,' there was no blemish, no disease, to be found in it. Every solid had its due consistency, every fluid its proper channel: while all

the senses were perfectly sound and lively, able to perform their operations with ease, vigour, and delight. There were no disorders in the earth, nothing unhealthy in the atmosphere. Though probably for the purpose of securing the body's immortality, the 'tree of life' was placed in the midst of Eden. Satan introduced sin into the world; and sin brought death and all our woe. The germ of bodily immortality expired the moment the divine law was transgressed. And as we all stood in a covenant relation to Adam, 'death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' The body is indeed fearfully and wonderfully made; is the most beautiful and curious piece of mechanism that was ever constructed. The dignity of its form, the symmetry of its parts, the nature of its different organs, the relations which they bear to each other and to external objects, all show the hand of a Divine architect. But in its present state it is subject to numberless infirmities. There is a constant tendency to disease. Some diseases disfigure the body, others torture it, while others rapidly corrupt its solids and poison its fluids. No powers of medicine, no skill of physicians, can preserve it in perpetual existence. If unmolested by violent distempers, or uninjured by accidents, still it will die. By the actions inseparable from life the frame undergoes a continual change, and receives its dissolution. The solid parts harden and become inflexible; earthy particles get deposited in the blood-vessels, and these lose their elasticity and become incapable of propelling the vital stream. The face becomes covered with wrinkles, and the head with grey hairs. Health fails and pains multiply. The members can no longer perform their functions, nor the senses their operations. The eyes can no longer behold objects, nor the ears receive sounds. Taste and smell cease to exist—feeling is at an end. Death takes hold of the frame, it is screwed up in a coffin, consigned to the grave, and speedily becomes a mass of nauseous, putrid matter. It sees corruption.

IT IS RAISED IN INCORRUPTION. The voice of the Son of God shall strike on its dull cold ear, and it shall start up, obedient to the call. Then, it shall no more be subject to pain, disease, decay, mutilation, disruption, dissolution, disorganization, degradation, putrefaction. It will no longer be the nurse of violent appetites and passions, the seed-bed of weaknesses, pains, and maladies. Its substance will be indestructible and unchangeable; its inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and will never fade away. There will be there no hostile attacks, infectious particles, unwholesome damps, poisonous weeds, or malignant vapours, conspiring to its destruction. It will no more be flushed with fever, or wan with consumption; suffocated with

asthma, or strangled with quinsy; swollen with dropsy, or racked with rheumatism. The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick; but shall flourish in immortal youth, in undecaying lustre, ever beautiful and ever young. 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.' The eye shall be adapted to the splendid scenery of that world, the ear to its melody and harmony, the smell to its amaranthine flowers, and the taste to the fruit of the tree of life. A separation shall never take place. No Elisha shall there exclaim, My father, my father! No David shall cry out, My son, my son! No Rachel shall be seen weeping for her children. No Mary or Martha mourning the loss of an affectionate brother. 'The children of the resurrection never die, but are as the angels.'

It is sown in dishonour. The body is adjudged to death 'because of sin.' This is the most dishonourable circumstance. It is a 'vile body'—the body of our humiliation; an expression which not only describes its present character, but refers to the cause of its degradation. It has been a partner with the soul in sinning—has ever been ready to obey the call of a polluted spirit. Its members have been instruments of unrighteousness. The tongue has been 'unruly;' the eye has often expressed pride or contempt; and the countenance has lowered with anger. It is therefore doomed to death as a punishment of sin. Even when 'the spirit is life because of righteousness,' that there may be a standing memorial of the evil of sin, though Christ could unquestionably translate His followers that they should not see death: it is appointed unto *them* 'once to die.' And when the body is committed to the tomb it bears the revolting marks of that degradation to which God's displeasure against sin had condemned it. Stripped of all that excited admiration and affection, it becomes so abhorrent to the senses, that we are under the necessity of removing it from our view as offensive and injurious. 'Let me bury my dead out of my sight,' said Abraham of his beloved Sarah. 'By this time he stinketh,' said Martha of her brother Lazarus. Yes: the body may be clothed in gorgeous apparel, it may be seated on a throne, have a crown on its head, a sceptre in its hand, and myriads bowing at its feet; yet, it shall be 'sown in dishonour.' Genius may light up the countenance, a mighty spirit may cogitate beneath its brow, or flash brightly from the eye; yet, it shall be 'sown in dishonour.' The eyes may be employed in attentively gazing on the works of God, the tongue in singing His praises, the feet in running the way of His commandments, and the hands in ministering to the necessities of His saints; yet, it shall be 'sown in dishonour.' Though purchased by 'a price, all price beyond,' though it may enclose a spirit washed in the blood of the

covenant, though it may be an object of angelic ministration, and a temple of the Holy Ghost, it shall be 'sown in dishonour.' Its beauties shall utterly wither. The socket of the once sparkling eye shall be a nest for the slimy reptile, the musical ear shall be closed, the eloquent tongue shall be silent, the athletic arm shall be motionless.

'Yet these, new rising from the tomb,
With lustre brighter far shall shine:
Revive with ever-during bloom,
Safe from diseases and decline.'

IT IS RAISED IN GLORY. It shall be so transformed as not to have a single vestige nor the faintest trace of its former debasement and deformity. Shall be so beautified, and covered with excessive brightness as far to exceed all that is beautiful and splendid on earth. 'Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun,' clothed with robes of light, and effulgent with splendours that can never fade. The countenance will yield to the impressions of the pure soul, filled with peace and beaming with love. The enshrined 'Spirit of Holiness' may let out His beams to illuminate His temple. If a loathsome worm of the earth can be transformed into a creature beautiful and splendid, possessed of new and nobler powers, that can feed on the honey of flowers, and skim with its outstretched wings the atmosphere; if an insignificant seed can produce a fragrant flower, a majestic tree, delicious fruit; if charcoal can be brought to send forth gas; who can say how great, how glorious, will be the change on the human body at its resurrection? The glorified body of Christ will be the *model* after which the bodies of His people shall be formed. 'He will change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body.' Not that our bodies will possess an equal measure of glory with His glorified body, nor all possess an equal measure of glory with each other; but we shall all possess the grand characteristic features. We shall 'see Him as He is.' Delightful thought! This will be the chief among the many sources of bliss in heaven.

'Welcome th' assembly of the blest,
Whose myriad voices never rest!
But when I mingle with the throng
That to the upper Church belong,
This, this my first desire shall be—
Give me the sight of HIM that ransom'd me!
JESU! of all the good to angels given,
Of all the beauty and the bliss of heaven,—
Bliss, Beauty, Heaven itself,—I ask a sight of THEE!'

But we shall not only 'see Him;' we shall be 'like Him.' The first glimpse we obtain of Him, as we come forth from the tomb, will be a transforming one. A powerful influence shall emanate from His

effulgence, which shall have the immediate and necessary effect of assimilating us into His likeness. The glorified body shall be like His, as it appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration, when its glory so irradiated His garments that they became white as snow. Like His, as Saul beheld it on his way to Damascus, when its brightness eclipsed the light of the noon-day sun. Like His, as represented to John, in Patmos, when His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, His eyes as a flame of fire, and His countenance as the sun shining in his strength. Like His body, now that it is raised to the pinnacle of the universe, seated on the throne of light, closely allied to Deity, beheld, admired, beloved, adored by cherubim and seraphim. The bodies of the saints shall be faithful transcripts of His. As tributary planets they shall reflect the glory of the eternal Sun, shall shine in His light, and move in His life.

'Mark, on the right, how amiable a grace!
Their Saviour's image fresh in every face!
What purple bloom my ravish'd soul admires,
And their eyes sparkling with immortal fires!
Triumphant beauty! charms that rise above
This world, and in blest angels kindle love!
Are these the forms that moulder'd in the dust?
O the transcendent glory of the just!'

But the splendour of the resurrection body surpasses all our conceptions. It shall be 'in glory;'—fairer than the fairest flower, purer than the unspotted firmament, brighter than the morning star, more radiant than the mid-day sun, more splendid than Adam's body in paradise, more illustrious than angels;—it shall be like the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is sown in weakness. In its present state it is so impotent as to be utterly unable to ward off the attacks of disease; and is easily worn out by labour, and stands in daily need of food. Often before the vital spark is extinct, all its powers fail; the sight becomes weak, the hearing dull, the hands shake, the knees tremble. 'The rush of numerous years bears down the most gigantic strength of man.' Nature is replete with the shafts of death, and in unnumbered forms seems hostile to the body.

'Wet, dry, cold, heat, at the appointed hour,
All act subservient to the tyrant's power;
And when obedient nature knows his will,
A fly, a grape-stone, or a hair can kill.'

It is only for the humours of the body to be forced out of their proper vessels, only a little blood to be out of its place, only a fibre disorganized, only an inflammation in the head, a little diminution or augmentation of heat or cold in the brain, and the tabernacle falls. When committed

to the grave, it is so weak that the feeblest creatures may insult it with impunity, and reptiles make it their unresisting prey.

IT IS RAISED IN POWER. It shall be endowed with a potency it never possessed before. All its members and organs will be matured and perfected in vigour. Its whole frame will be supported and pervaded by a power, of which at present we can form but little conception. Like an angel, it will 'excel in strength;' and one angel was strong enough to destroy a hundred and fourscore and five thousand of the Assyrian army in one night. It will possess the power of moving, perhaps from world to world, with greater celerity than the sunbeams, and with greater ease than we can now pass from the chapel to our respective houses. As the bodies of Enoch, and Elijah, and our Lord 'went up' into heaven, so shall the bodies of all the saints; unaffected by the laws of gravitation or by the pressure of the atmosphere. We shall have the power of adapting them to every station and to every employment. Perhaps of expanding or contracting them at our pleasure; and of assuming different forms. The eye may have the power of seeing minute objects immensely distant, and the ear of catching the faintest sounds. The body will possess a power which the magnitude of no duty will overcome, the continuance of no action impair. We shall move without weariness, cogitate without exhaustion, contemplate the loftiest objects without difficulty. When all the monuments of art shall have crumbled into dust; when mountains which have stood for ages without any sensible decay, shall have passed away; when the light of yonder sun shall have been extinguished, and the stars shall have ceased their twinkling; the body shall be in full health and strength; shall possess power to 'serve God day and night,' without cessation, or rest, or fatigue; to gaze without inconvenience on all the splendours of that world, and to sustain, without fainting, the pressure of an 'exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'

It is sown a natural body. 'An *animal* body, having a multiplicity of solids and fluids of different kinds, with different functions; composed of muscles, fibres, tendons, cartilages, bones, arteries, veins, nerves, blood, and various juices, requiring continual support from aliment; and hence the necessity of labour to provide food, and skill to prepare it; which food must be masticated, digested, and refined; what is proper for nourishment secreted, brought into the circulation, farther elaborated, and prepared to enter into the composition of every part; hence growth and nutrition; without which no organized body can possibly exist.' This animal body is the seat of temptation. Its various appetites and passions 'war against the soul,' are ever ready to lead us astray, and

must be 'kept under.' It is a clog to the soul, a hindrance to devotion, retarding our progress in works of faith and labours of love. When 'the spirit is willing the flesh is weak.'

IT IS RAISED A SPIRITUAL BODY. Were it to come forth from the tomb with its present animal properties, it would require food, and sleep, and medicine in heaven. But it shall be raised a 'spiritual body;'—a body completely divested of every carnal susceptibility, of all the gross properties of animal nature, and of the ponderous materials of flesh and blood. It shall be of such a refined contexture as to need no animal refreshments. It shall hunger no more and thirst no more. 'Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them. They who are counted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God.' The body will then no doubt retain a resemblance to that which we now possess. It will be visible, though perhaps transparent. It will have the appearance of the present body without its grossness. It will not need food nor be sensible of fatigue. Its dependence on earth and relation to earth will terminate. Its elements will be altered, its properties will be different, its nature will be impassible, indivisible, imperishable. All its powers and propensities will have a holy direction. It will be a cheerful, active, perpetual instrument of holy exertion. Its organs will serve to receive impressions of vast and varied feelings of complacency, of tenderness, of admiration, of joy, of rapture. It will be so refined and spiritualised as to be no less meet for the mansions of heaven than it was in its natural state for dwelling on earth. It will be a fit habitation for a glorified spirit; assisting instead of hindering its operations. Its organs will never more prove temptations to sin, but all be aids to holiness. It will be suited to the exercises of a spiritual world, will be capable of sublimer agency and nobler duties, of purer pleasures and finer sensibilities; and shall dwell in a region where all will be congenial with its nature. 'A spiritual body.' Not purely spiritual, like the thinking substance; nor grossly material like our present bodies; but something between both; perhaps formed of a matter similar to that of light or ether. 'Opposed to our thinking principle, and as its instrument, it is material; compared with our present body, it is beyond all conception sublimated and refined, and in this sense termed spiritual.' It is as consistent to use the epithet 'spiritual body,' as the terms 'spirituous liquor,' or 'carnal mind.' But though the body will be body still, it will be inconceivably changed and perfected. Unthought-of latent principles and powers may then be developed. It may have additional members and senses; and be distin-

guished by new forms, and new displays of personal beauty and glory. It will yield to the spirit the most exquisite sensations of bliss. It shall exchange its present sordid and laborious occupations for the most delightful and sublime employments ; its present low and oft interrupted enjoyments for pleasures, pure, profound, and perennial.

We must now make a few *reflections.*

If the body shall be so glorious, how great must be the glory of the soul! By the one we are allied to the inferior animals, by the other to angels and to God. How will He who created the soul in His own image, and who now delights to bless it, and to adorn it with the garments of salvation, then exalt, adorn, and enrapture it. Who can now conceive what will then be the strength of its faculties, the extent of its capacity, the intensity of its affections ; with what rich and boundless stores of knowledge it will then be filled ; to what heights of holiness it will ascend, and into what depths of happiness it will sink ?

We should instantly seek an interest in Christ. 'He hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.' But only those who have faith in Him will He raise to glory everlasting. 'I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this ?' Then instantly fly for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before you. What avails it, that your imagination is gratified with a description of the future glory of the righteous, if you do not sustain the character ? What avails it, that in your musings you sometimes picture to yourselves scenes in which are concentrated all that you can conceive of happiness and glory, and perhaps indulge some feeble desire after them, if you will not diligently use the means which are necessary to prepare you for their possession ? What avails it, that a dread is awakened when you think of the terrors the wicked in death, and of their coming forth from their graves to everlasting damnation,' if you will not acquaint yourselves with Him who has 'the keys of hell and of death ?' But let me beseech you to come to Christ. He wept that you might smile ; He died that you might never die. Come now. Before to-morrow evening the sun may have shed his rays on your lifeless corpse. This is the accepted time ; this is the day of salvation. Come as you are ; not in any assumed, but in your real character. Disclaim every other title than that of a guilty, depraved, wretched, helpless, hell-deserving sinner. Weary and heavy laden, get within the hallowed shade of the cross. Firmly, exclusively, rely upon that 'precious blood,' and it shall wash away thy stains, and fit thee for thy passage.

We should possess our bodies in sanctification and in honour. They

are destined for glory and immortality. But if you adorn and pamper them here with pride and luxury, they will rise to 'shame and everlasting contempt.' You may call for the rocks and the mountains to fall upon you, but it will be in vain. You will be dragged forth by the messengers of wrath. 'Every man in his own order:' in his own class or regiment; the liar with the liar, the swearer with the swearer, the drunkard with the drunkard, the lewd with the lewd, the oppressor with the oppressor. The same wicked, carnal, covetous, malicious beings they were on earth. Their malignity now fully expressed in every lineament of their countenances. Spectres of horror and dismay; with ghastly shapes most horrible. Their bodies more vile and deformed; strengthened to sustain a heavier load of misery, and to suffer indescribably greater pain. The unwelcome union of body and soul has taken place, and each shall be the incessant tormentor of the other.

> 'In gloomy orbs their trembling eye-balls roll,
> And tell the horrid secrets of the soul:
> Each gesture mourns, each look is black with care,
> And every groan is laden with despair.'

Yes, the polluting and enfeebling effects of sin will adhere to your bodies, and will torment them like a maimed limb, or a deranged organ. So that when you are revelling in gross and debasing pleasures, you are inflicting on yourselves wounds, and inducing distempers, which shall rankle and fester to all eternity. When gratifying your unhallowed appetites, you are providing nourishment for the 'worm that dieth not,' and fuel for the 'fire that shall never be quenched.' And in that place of torment every smell will be offensive; every sound discordant; every object loathsome; and everything you touch, painful. But you need not be thus circumstanced. Your bodies may be raised 'in glory.' Then now restrain its passions, and curb its appetites. Mortify your members which are upon the earth. Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto Him, which is your reasonable service.

The subject should console you when bereaved of your Christian friends. You have seen them committed to the tomb, 'earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.' Over their graves you would still stand and weep. But the seed that is sown there can spring without being watered by your tears: the dews and sunshine of heaven are upon it. Thy parent, thy child, 'thy brother shall rise again.' And even now they are not conscious of those horrors which you suppose infest the grave. To them it is neither dark, nor cold, nor dreary. They feel not the worms that are crawling over them. They are not aware of any degradation. But you shall meet them again. That countenance on which you so often

gazed with delight, but which death changed, you shall once more see. And when it shall burst on thy view in the morning of the resurrection, it shall be brighter than an angel's face, and glowing with affection and joy.

This subject should encourage you amidst your trials. Are you now reproached for righteousness' sake? When Christ shall appear, your rebuke shall be taken away. Are you now grappling with cold poverty? Then you shall hunger no more, and thirst no more. Have you a weak and sickly frame? Then it shall be sweetly renovated, and closely compacted. And if you are 'in Jesus,' you need not fear *death*. It shall bring you into more intimate union with saints, and angels, and God. And the *grave* shall be the couch on which you shall repose until the morning of the resurrection. Your Saviour shall call, and you shall answer Him: He shall come, and you shall mount up with joy to meet Him. And then shall the 'most worthy Judge eternal' reward not only the soul, but the body, in proportion to what you do and suffer for Him on earth. The more your *eyes* weep for your own sins and the sins of others here, the better fitted will they be for the full splendours of the vision beatific. The *tongue* that is now most ready to speak for the Saviour will sing the loudest in heaven. The *ear* that listens most attentively to what the Spirit saith unto the Churches will be the best prepared for the melody and harmony of cherubic and seraphic voices. The *hands* that are now most readily stretched forth to the relief of a disciple of Christ, in the name of a disciple, shall there most triumphantly wave the palm of victory. And the *feet* that have come most cheerfully to the house of God will be best suited to walk the streets of the New Jerusalem, and to conduct you to the inmost recesses of that temple which has no need of the sun, nor of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

SERMON XI.

DEGREES OF GLORY.

AND THEY THAT BE WISE SHALL SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT; AND THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER.'—*Daniel* xii. 3.

BY the 'wise' we are not to understand the profound philosopher, the eloquent orator, the skilful linguist, the sagacious statesman, the prudent merchant, the enterprising traveller, the ingenious mechanic. Their talents and acquirements may lead to some interesting discoveries, may be rendered subservient to the acquisition of wealth and honour, and may tend to increase the knowledge and comfort of mankind. But however profound, or extensive, or various a person's attainments may be, if they are bounded by 'the things that are seen,' he, according to the Scriptures, is a 'fool.' His knowledge increases his responsibility, enhances his guilt, and will aggravate his doom. By the 'wise' are meant those who are 'wise unto salvation;' who experimentally, practically, savingly, know 'the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.' They have selected the most important object—personal salvation—and have employed the best, the only means for its attainment. They are therefore wise, not because they are learned or scientific, but because they are godly. 'The fear of the Lord that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.'

By those who 'turn many to righteousness' are meant those who, being well instructed in the things of God themselves, are 'wise to win souls.' They feel that from their Lord they have received their talents, that on Him they are dependent for their continuance, and that to Him they must soon render an account of their use. Hence with scrupulous fidelity they labour to bring a revenue of glory to Him, in the salvation of souls. They instruct the ignorant, warn the careless, confront the sceptic, encourage the timid, reclaim the wanderer. The love of souls is their ruling passion. Under its influence they make all sacrifices, run all risks, brave all dangers, encounter all difficulties, not counting their lives dear unto them. They are fertile in expedients. They rest not

contented with the ordinary plans of others. They devise new schemes, adopt new measures, put forth new energies, enter on undiscovered ground, and cut out new channels for the streams of salvation to flow to those who are ready to perish. They wait not until application is made, and a variety of arguments are employed to induce them to contribute; but are volunteers in every benevolent and holy design. The blessing of heaven is on the labours of such men. Instrumentally, they 'turn many,' —not to a mere creed, a name, a profession; their object is not proselytism, the extension of a sect, the prevalence of a party,—but to 'turn many to righteousness,'—to the forgiveness of their sins, the regeneration of their hearts, the entire sanctification of their nature, that they may be saved with an everlasting salvation. Such characters may be neglected, despised, condemned, misrepresented, and persecuted in this world, but observe the reward that awaits them in the world to come. 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.' Imagery expressive of their knowledge. They shall shine above all the mists of ignorance, the clouds of error, and contemplate every object in the clear, strong, steady light of the throne of God. Of their purity. Sin, the emblem of which is darkness, shall never enter there. They shall be without spot or wrinkle, and fully and visibly reflect the image of the transcendent original of all purity. Of their joy. In heaven there shall be 'no night' of affliction. No sickness, no pain, no death. No disease of body to lessen the enjoyments of the soul. No clouds of temptation to obscure the vision. No fears of falling to chill the exaltations of triumph. The arm of oppression shall be broken. The tongue of slander shall be silent in darkness. The trumpet shall have sounded its last blast. The shout of battle shall have expired. Destructions shall have come to a perpetual end. Their sphere shall be one of serenity, and sanctity, and safety, and joy, and glory. Glory, contrasted with which the glory of this world vanishes away—its honours are fleeting shadows, its pleasures empty vapours, and its riches lose all their attractions. Now, 'they that are wise;'—who know the Lord, live to the Lord, die in the Lord, and thus save their own souls—'shall shine as the brightness of the firmament,' when not a cloud floats across it to dim its serene lustre. 'But they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.' They shall shine bright as the luminaries which adorn the firmament. Splendid in the midst of splendour; lovely in the midst of universal loveliness. They shall occupy stations of pre-eminent distinction; shall wear crowns of peculiar brilliance, crowns that shall receive additional lustre from the crowns of those they have turned to righteousness. For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are

not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

Attend now to the two following propositions. First. In heaven there will be different degrees of glory. Secondly. That glory will be eternally increasing.

First. *In heaven there will be different degrees of glory.* All the saints will not have bodies of equal brightness, souls of equal capacity, enjoyments of equal richness and depth. They will not have crowns of equal splendour, mansions of equal magnificence, seats of equal elevation, nor be sent on errands of equally distinguished honour. But the brightness of their bodies, the capacity of their souls, the depth of their enjoyments, the splendour of their crowns, the magnificence of their mansions, the elevation of their seats, and the distinguished honour of their employments, will be in proportion to *their devotedness to God while on earth.* We are desirous that this doctrine should be very deeply impressed on your minds. It has a direct bearing on your experience as Christians. It contains one of the strongest motives to induce you to devote every faculty of your spirits, every affection of your hearts, every member of your bodies, every portion of your influence, every moment of your time, and every penny of your property, unreservedly to the service of Him to whom your more than all is due. In support of this doctrine our appeal is to the Word of God. Christ, when speaking of those who are reviled, and persecuted, and have all manner of evil spoke of them falsely, for His sake, says, that 'great,' emphatically great, is their reward in heaven. He speaks of those who shall be 'least,' and of those who shall be 'great' in the kingdom of heaven. He says, that he that receiveth a 'prophet' shall receive a prophet's reward; and that he that receiveth a 'righteous man' shall receive a righteous man's reward. When Peter said, 'We have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?' Jesus answered, 'When the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' Again He said, 'To sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give,' that is, in a way of partiality, not denying but that there were peculiarly honourable seats in His kingdom; 'but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father;'—to those who are prepared by a large measure of holiness for the occupancy of such elevated seats. In the parable of the talents, the talent which had been neglected is given to him whose five had gained other five. Again, while to him whose pound had gained five it is said, 'Have authority over five cities;' to him whose pound had gained ten pounds it is said, 'Have authority over ten cities.' The Apostle Paul states the same doctrine when he says to the Corinthians, 'Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.' That the

minister who builds 'wood, hay, stubble' shall be saved as by fire, and shall suffer loss; while he who builds 'gold, silver, precious stones' shall receive a 'reward.' Again, that 'there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.' And from this consideration, he urges upon them: 'Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.' When he would encourage them to bear up under their sufferings, he says, 'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory:'—a far greater weight of glory than we should have received, had we not been the subjects of affliction on earth. As a motive to liberality, he tells them, that 'he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.' He reminds the Ephesians, 'that whatsoever good any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.' And the elder in heaven informed the Apostle John that the redeemed arrayed in splendid robes are 'those who came up out of great tribulation.'

The same doctrine has countenance from the peculiar honour conferred on Moses and Elijah, in being selected from the 'innumerable company,' to attend upon Christ in the Mount of Transfiguration. And when we read of the redeemed singing the song of Moses, and sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, who can doubt but that these illustrious individuals are objects of attraction, and occupy seats of honour in the kingdom above?

The various figures by which heaven is represented impress us with the conviction that there will be different degrees of glory. It will be a family, a Church, a city, a kingdom. And is it not difficult to conceive of all this, if there be no gradations of rank, if none of the members be invested with greater authority and honour than others?

There are plain intimations that there are different orders of angelic beings:—a hierarchy in heaven. There are thrones and dominions, principalities and powers. There is the angel and the archangel, the cherub and the seraph.

And may we not infer the doctrine from the wisdom, the justice, and the goodness of God? He plainly presents the blessings of heaven before us under the character of *rewards*. Rewards not of debt, but of grace. But real though gratuitous. Regulated by the strict rule of justice, though flowing from the fountain of mercy. Hence, as there is such an astonishing difference among the members of the Church on earth, will there not be a difference in heaven? As there is such a

difference in their labours, will there not be a difference in their rewards? If God is peculiarly 'glorified' by those servants who bear 'much fruit' on earth, will He not peculiarly glorify them in heaven? Is it reasonable to suppose that ordinary Christians, who are often complaining of their leanness; who, when called to duty, can so easily see a lion in the way; who have such a dislike to the cross; who so nicely make their calculations for the purpose of ascertaining how 'little' they shall give towards the conversion of a world; will have the same reward in heaven as those who have been 'burning and shining lights,' as the patient patriarchs, the holy prophets, the zealous apostles, the suffering martyrs; or, as the Wesleys and Whitfield, men who bore the burden and heat of the day, and hazarded their lives for the Gospel?

As the graces of the Spirit are now exercised, they are strengthened. As holiness is secured, the capacity of the soul is thereby enlarged and it is consequently prepared for a larger measure of the happiness of heaven. So that, while every capacity will be filled, the largest capacity will have the largest share of enjoyment. In proportion to the surface which you present will be the quantity of light and purity and joy that will flow into your raptured spirits. But as the wisdom, and justice, and goodness of God will be so strikingly displayed in the bestowment of the heavenly rewards, there will be no envy, no jealousy. No one will be useless, or overlooked, or unemployed. Every individual will know his place and will keep it; will be thankful for it, and cheerfully discharge the duties connected with it. The highest will not look down with contempt on the lowest; the lowest will not look up with envy to the highest. Should you behold a brother with a brighter crown than your own, no improper feeling will be awakened, for you will be fully convinced that he wears it in consequence of his having been more devoted to God on earth than you were. If you see a sister in a mansion more magnificent than the one you occupy, you will not attribute it to any partiality, but to her having secured, while here, a larger measure of holiness than you obtained. The happiness of all will be the happiness of each.

If we have established our first proposition, that in heaven there will be different degrees of glory, we now call your attention to the

Second. *That this glory will be eternally increasing.* If we are privileged to enter that world, we shall shine forth with continued, with undiminished, and with increasing splendour. There will be no sameness in the enjoyments of heaven. The inhabitants will not be stationary. And as there will be no possibility of retrograding—for probation will have terminated—we shall be perpetually advancing. Imagine not that you will see all that is to be seen; hear all that is to be heard; and enjoy

all that is to be enjoyed, instantly after you have entered heaven. The knowledge, holiness, and happiness you possess on passing the gates of the city will form the starting-point of an unending career. From the moment that you first stand amidst the splendours of the throne, manifestations, and instructions, and communications will be made to you in eternal progression.

If we look around us here, we find that almost everything is capable of growth. Plants, insects, birds, beasts, fishes come from exceedingly small particles and gradually rise to a higher state. Look at man. At first he seems to be governed entirely by sense, then the imagination begins to play, then memory is exercised, and then reason is employed Contemplate the Christian. He is called to be constantly growing in grace. He never arrives at a point in religion beyond which he cannot pass; it is a sea without a bottom or a shore. It is his privilege to be daily advancing in the divine life, and to be rising higher and higher in the scale of excellence. And will he cease to rise as soon as he enters heaven? Will he there meet with an impassable boundary? Does not the soul shrink at the thought of having ascended the highest pinnacle, solved the last problem, and attained its full maturity of knowledge, purity, and joy?

The subjects of study in that world will be of such vast magnitude and endless variety, and our capacities so limited, that it will not be possible for us to obtain a knowledge of them in an instant. Consider the mediums through which we may there acquire knowledge. Will it be by personal inspection? But shall we be able to survey in a moment the various systems, and worlds, and objects throughout our Lord's domains? Will He be pleased directly to make the revelation? But is it likely that our minds will be able to take in the almost infinite variety of ideas at once? Shall we derive knowledge from instructions that we shall there receive? And who can tell but the expression 'they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars' may mean, that they shall diffuse their light and illuminate others by their instructions:—that Moses shall there explain to us his five books, and David his psalms, and Isaiah his prophecies, and Paul his epistles? But all this will occupy some time. And the same may be said if we acquire knowledge by the exercise of our reasoning powers.

Angels are certainly increasing in knowledge. They know more now than when they poured forth on the plains of Bethlehem, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men;" and they knew more then than when, at the creation, they sang together and shouted for joy. They are represented as looking down, ardently admiring and closely studying the things of redemption. There can be little doubt

that the saints in heaven will be perpetually advancing. Animating thought! Glorious prospect! We shall be eternally increasing

In Knowledge. In our knowledge of God. Shall be acquiring a farther insight into His character, shall be discovering fresh uncreated beauties, shall be witnessing new and wondrous evolutions of His glorious perfections, brighter manifestations of His infinite wisdom, His almighty power, His unspotted purity, and His boundless goodness.

In our knowledge of His Works. We shall perhaps be permitted to travel from planet to planet, from system to system, the whole material creation being spread out before us in all its beauty, and harmony, and magnificence. As we proceed fields more ample, more lovely, will be bursting upon our view; discoveries more interesting, more important, will be made by our enquiring spirits. And through the world of minds we shall be continually advancing in our contemplation, studying the fervour of the seraph, the loveliness of the cherub, and the splendour of the archangel.

We shall be eternally increasing in our knowledge of the Providence of God. What is now so mysterious to us shall be made plain. We shall know why holy, devoted missionaries, in the midst of their usefulness, were permitted to be taken away, by the upsetting of canoes, by the hands of savage men, or to sink beneath their toils. The complexity of the divine administration shall then open into one bright display of wisdom, and power, and goodness. We shall not only have light thrown on some prominent parts of our history, gilding the tops of the hills, but the eternal Sun shall pour His meridian splendour into every valley, shall dissolve every mist, and shall discover that all His designs towards us were designs of love.

We shall be increasing in our knowledge of the Word of God. Of its histories, its precepts, its doctrines; especially of the great redeeming work. All these subjects shall be more perfectly known as the pages eternally brighten under our gaze. And in every object we shall see God. We shall remember that 'He is the grandeur which everywhere spreads, the sublimity which rises, the beauty which glows, the life which animates, the wisdom which astonishes, and the goodness which provides, sustains and rejoices; we shall see this field of contemplation and intelligence not only exalted, immense, and endlessly improving, but actually divine.'

We shall be eternally increasing in Holiness. This will be the result of our knowledge. In proportion as we know God will be our devotedness to Him. Our reverence, a delightful and ennobling emotion, will be continually increasing. Our admiration will be rising higher and higher. Our love becoming more and more intense. We shall regard

Him with unbounded complacency, with unmingled gratitude, and with the utmost confidence. Whatever displays His character will engage our attention and kindle our joy. His glory will be the very element of our being. Now we shall be employed in its study, then transported in its vision, and again we shall strike our harps to its praise. We shall catch the splendours to which we shall be exposed, diffuse the glory we receive, and resemble the brilliance with which we shall be filled. The graces which now adorn us will receive new and endless accessions, and we shall be drawn nearer to, and be more fully assimilated into a resemblance of Him whom we love.

We shall be eternally increasing in Happiness. Each disclosure of purpose, the unveiling of each perfection, will be a new occasion and source of our bliss. This will retain but one character, and know but of one origin, whether it be contemplation, acclamation, or flight to distant worlds. Every object presented to our view will excite our most delightful admiration and augment our joy. 'We shall be delighted to see the pictures of the divine perfections; but we shall see them in the presence of the inimitable originals and with ineffable joy and wonder contemplate the resemblance; and then, with rapturous delight, give the praise, not to the shadow, but to the Living, the Infinite Substance.' As our souls will there be continually expanding, our enjoyments will be increasing. The pure river of the water of life will be flowing forth with a greater and yet greater depth. Our bodies shall be yielding to our spirits more exquisite sensations of delight. They shall never grow old; shall have no wrinkle, no grey hair, indicative of age, but their bloom, their beauty, their splendour shall be continually increasing. And with what ecstasy shall we traverse the everlasting hills, with an activity that never wearies, a buoyancy of spirit that never grows languid; or range over the happy plains, incapable of woe! Will not our enjoyment be perpetually augmenting, as the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall lead us to fountains of living water; or as we pluck on the banks of the river those amaranthine flowers of matchless beauty, exquisite fragrance, and growing freshness. And what will be our delight when we recognise in that world those friends and relations who have been torn from our sanctified embrace by the cold hand of death; those companions with whom we once took sweet counsel; those ministers from whose labours we derived such instruction and consolation; or, as we extend the circle of our acquaintance among saints of other days and other climes, and as we ascend through the ranks of angels, and gaze, and listen, 'While some lovely seraph tell, how Michael battled and the dragon fell'!

But still God will be our all in all. As our graces will be only emanations from His excellence, our enjoyments will be perennial streams

flowing from the eternal fountain of blessedness. Every successive step in holiness will increase the joy unspeakable and full of glory. As He eternally lifts upon us, in greater splendour, the light of His countenance, we shall rejoice more and more. We shall see the King in His beauty. We shall dwell with rapturous delight in His presence. We shall perform, at His command, our services upon a wide and still extending scale. We shall sing in joyful and in loftiest anthems His praises. We shall gaze with eagle eye on His splendour, and rise, with eagle wings outstretched, with a perpetually invigorated flight, nearer and nearer to Him who is the original of all beauty, the centre of all holiness, and the source of all happiness.

SERMON XII.

BROTHERLY LOVE.

'A NEW COMMANDMENT I GIVE UNTO YOU, THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER; AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, THAT YE ALSO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.'—*John* xiii. 34.

NEW, because of its peculiar excellence, new among the religionists at that time, new in His ministry, new because now to be exercised in a new relation as disciples, in a new measure, by a new sanction, from new motives, and according to a new example. This is our Lord's own explanation, '*As* I have loved you.' He more than fulfilled the original law. He was the incarnation of love, a beautiful exemplification, the very personification of love—love living, breathing, speaking, acting amongst men. His birth was the nativity of love, His sermons the words of love, His journeys the footsteps of love, His miracles the wonders of love, His prayers the supplications of love, His sighs the heavings of love, His tears the meltings of love, His crucifixion the agonies of love, His resurrection the triumph of love, His intercession the exhibition of love, and His dispensation the manifestation, commendation, and perfection of love. What He enjoins in the text is Brotherly Love. Observe:

I. THE EXAMPLE TO WHICH YOU SHOULD ADJUST IT—'As I have loved you.' Christ has loved you

1. *Disinterestedly.* Was under no necessity, engagement, obligation; could derive no advantage from it; was happy in the contemplation of His own infinite, harmonious, and glorious perfections. *So* love one another, independent of any regard to your own fancy, honour, interest. Delight in the happiness of one another; breathe pure benevolence. Do good, expecting nothing again. Gather bliss from seeing others blessed.

2. *Unmeritedly.* He saw nothing lovely, attractive, or meritorious in you, but loved you when you were guilty, depraved, deformed, treacherous, rebellious. *So* love a disciple; not because he is cultivated, gentlemanly, wealthy, and respectable—that would be carnal complacency

and not Christian affection—but because he is a disciple, loved by Christ, and reflects the image of Christ. He may be of 'low degree,' have little of this world, but you must love a rich Saviour in a poor saint. He may have failings, blemishes, infirmities, and these you are not required to love, but to love him in spite of them. Do not magnify his weaknesses. Put the best construction on his conduct.

3. *Condescendingly.* Only love brought Him from His throne in the heavens. Though rich, became poor; assumed your nature; exposed Himself to torrents of abuse, to be buffeted, scourged, condemned, crucified for your sakes. He atoned for the sins you had committed, to recover the inheritance you had forfeited. He loved you more than you love yourselves, more than He loved the glories and inhabitants of heaven, more than He loved Himself. He considered no humiliation too great, no sacrifice too painful, no gift too valuable for you. *So* love one another. Be willing to put yourselves to inconveniences, and to make sacrifices for the good of the brethren. Love not in word only, but in deed and in truth. Do not carry yourselves with a lofty look, a cold indifference, a careless distance toward one another, but cherish a tender solicitude, a deep sympathy. Patiently listen to the tale of distress; visit the afflicted; lift up the hands that hang down, and confirm the feeble knees. Restore the fallen. Forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

4. *Generously.* With an intensity of affection, with a noble, princely liberality. He has taken you into His favour, friendship, fellowship. He has clothed you with the garments of salvation, withheld from you no good thing. He has written you on the palms of His hands, engraven you on His heart, distinguished you by the most honourable titles, called you His jewels, brethren, joint-heirs. He entrusts you with His secrets, opens to you His whole heart. 'All things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you.' He makes you more potent than the mightiest worldly potentates. Through Christ strengthening you, you can do all things. He will give you grace and glory. All are yours, for ye are Christ's. And love effects union. He dwells in your hearts by faith; prays 'That they all may be one: as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.' This is the closest, most glorious and ineffable union. Then love, 'as I have loved you.' Let your love, by its attractive, cementing, cohesive influence, become a bond of intimate union, and freely circulate through all the members: a bond of stricter, closer, tenderer union than any ties of consanguinity, language, country, or interest. Let your delight be with the saints that are on the earth. Rejoice in their prosperity. Seek their company, enjoy their fellowship. Let no worldly persons, no secular concerns, keep you from

the communion of saints. It is by friction that heat is brought out of bodies. Complacency is the very essence of love.

5. *Unchangeably.* Having loved His own, He loved them unto the end. And He has loved you amidst all the changes that have taken place in your friends and relations, and in your own feelings and circumstances. His has not been a momentary impulse, a flitting affection. It has not grown old nor cold; it has suffered no decay nor diminution. He has not abandoned you to your foes, nor left you to yourselves; but followed you through every lane of life, and assisted you in every time of need. When father and mother forsook you, He took you up. When unfruitful, He paid increased attention to you. He has had you constantly in His thoughts. He ever lives to intercede for you. He says, I will never leave thee; no, I will never forsake thee. He promises to be with you in the valley and shadow of death, to raise your vile body, and fashion it like unto His glorious body; and that where He is you shall be also. Nothing shall be able to separate you from the love of Christ. So love one another. You may be neglected by those from whom you expected attention. You may meet with unkind return for disinterested services. Offences will come, but blessed are they who shall not be offended. Love, though the more you love the less you are loved. Let no waters quench it, no floods drown it.

II. THE OBLIGATIONS THAT BIND YOU TO CULTIVATE IT.

1. *It is positively enjoined.* When our first parents came from the hands of their Creator the law of love was written on their hearts. It was enjoined by the Mosaic law, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' 'A new commandment I give unto you.' Not a mere suggestion, advice, or recommendation. It is not optional with you whether you will love or not. He who is your Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, Redeemer, and who will shortly be your Judge, enjoins it. He has a supreme right to do it. To Him you are under ten thousand obligations —obligations the value of which can never be estimated, and the debt of which can never be discharged. Will you not then seek to please Him? Will you dare to run counter to His will, and break a commandment so benevolent, plain, decisive, and authoritative?

2. *Consistency* should prompt you. You call yourselves disciples, scholars, who have placed yourselves under His tuition for the purpose of learning the Christian science. And will you call Him Master and Lord and yet not do the things which He commands you? Profess to be His followers, and yet walk in a directly opposite direction? Appropriate the title of Christians, and not exhibit the mind that was in Christ? Will you give Him the kiss of friendship, and go and betray Him? Say,

Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee, and yet display all bitterness and wrath toward those who resemble Him? Can you take pleasure in contemplating Him, the eternal Sun, if the reflection of Him gives you pain? Can you love the great Original, if you turn away with indifference from the picture of Him in His disciples? If, therefore, you do not love one another, you libel your profession, scandalise your Lord, wound Him in His own house, and demolish what you profess to raise.

3. *Benevolence* should urge you. 'Then shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if you love one another.' Christ is gone into the heavens, and so cannot any longer benefit men by His own personal example. He has left it with *you*, His disciples, to adorn His doctrine, exemplify His precepts, extend His interests, and add triumphs to His name. If you love one another, men will see that you believe His statements, regard His authority, imitate His example, and feel a concern for His honour. The people of the world are peculiarly keen in observing your temper and conduct; and if they discover no brotherly love among you, their neglect of religion will be somewhat justified, and the triumph of infidelity will be complete. This is the stone of stumbling on which the infidel sharpens his sword and points his spear to attack the truth. But walk in love and you will take from his lips the common and cutting taunt, Agree among yourselves before you ask me to join you. You will render religion attractive. Your unconverted neighbours will be led to exclaim, See how these Christians love one another! And probably to add, This people shall be my people, and their God my God.

4. *Self-interest* should induce you. This love is a source of indescribable pleasure and hallowed enjoyment. It flows from the fountain of blessedness, and is perfective of your nature. To love is to be happy. It will promote your prosperity. If Ephraim envy Judah, marvel not if Judah envy Ephraim, and discord, and divisions, and desolations follow. But let your love abound, and violence will no more be heard in your land, wasting nor destruction within your borders. Harmony shall pervade your assemblies; the voice of rejoicing shall be heard in your tabernacles; your security shall be enhanced, and you will become prepared for that heaven where your love shall burn with seraphic ardour.

As brotherly love is founded in, flows from, and is dependent on love to God, let me beseech you to seek His favour. Repent of your sins. Believe in the Saviour and the love of God shall be shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost given unto you. Then keep yourselves in the love of God. Cultivate brotherly love. Seek acquaintance with the brethren. Unite with them in Church-fellowship. Christ has sanctioned this, prayed for it, commanded it, and hence it must be dangerous to

neglect it. If all were to keep aloof from each other, then there would be no Church, no fellowship of saints in the world. Union is power. He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. Then join the disciples. Say at once, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

SERMON XIII.

THE MOTHER OF US ALL.

'JERUSALEM WHICH IS ABOVE IS FREE. WHICH IS THE MOTHER OF US ALL.'—*Gal.* iv. 26.

THE Bible is emphatically truth. It teaches nothing but truth, yet not universal truth. It is not a scientific book; it is not intended to teach geology or geography, meteorology or astronomy. Its allusions to such subjects are incidental and brief. It gives not a full account of the history of man, or of any of the nations of the earth. It is not a metaphysical essay, or a treatise on morals. It contains not a formally arranged and closely compacted system of theology. But there is theology in it, and morals and metaphysics and history; yes, and poetry, such as can nowhere else be found. In the context we have an allegory —a figurative discourse—in which one subject is described by another that resembles it in its properties and circumstances. Moses, in his history, states facts. Paul, by allusion to those facts, illustrates the condition of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in his day, and the members of the Gospel Church. Of the latter he speaks in the text, and reminds us that she is Heavenly, Free, and Maternal.

I. HEAVENLY. The 'Jerusalem from above.' Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judæa, was one of the most ancient cities of the world, and the most honoured. 'Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.' Thither the tribes resorted. There the magnificent temple stood, the priests officiated, the altars blazed, the victims bled, the worship was performed. It was the special residence of the Great King. 'This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell;' where His glory was displayed, and His gifts dispensed. Hence the inspired writers use it to represent the Church of Christ. By this is meant an assembly of faithful men who associate to promote their own personal piety. The Christian Church is 'from above.'

1. *She was planned above.* Of heavenly origin. Not the result of a casual or sudden impulse; but of a deliberate purpose and plan, nicely and carefully arranged. When man's apostasy was foreseen, the

whole scheme of his restoration was contrived, and of the Church that should be formed. It was not an after thought, a supplementary arrangement, much less a work of man's device. Everything in the actual execution was exactly conformed to the original idea in the mind of God. All the laws, ordinances, discipline, and offices were patterns of things in the heavens.

2. *Her Founder is from above.* This was predicted. 'They shall call His name Immanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us.' John was of the earth, but says of Christ, 'He that cometh from above is above all.' Christ declared, 'I came down from heaven.' He brought full credentials. 'The works that I do they testify of Me.' He healed all manner of sicknesses among the people, raised the dead, cast out devils, and hushed the tempest into a calm. His supreme Godhead is of eternal importance, and is eternally established. It is the foundation of the Church. It was not of Peter, but of Peter's noble confession, that Christ said, 'Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' All He did on earth was in reference to things above. When He had finished His work below, He said, 'Father, glorify Thou Me with the glory I had with Thee before the world was.' He went up into heaven. His seat is above. There, as a King, He governs the Church, and as a Priest, He intercedes and sympathises. The connection is not broken by His elevation. He is the Head, we are the members. When kings rage and rulers take counsel, He sits in the heavens and laughs, and has them in derision. When the members of His Church are afflicted, He is afflicted. The only standard for the Church, in faith, morals, worship, is not tradition, or ecclesiastical authority, or philosophical speculation, but the Scriptures given by inspiration of God, that came 'from above.'

3. *She is related to the Church above.* Heaven is the metropolis of the great empire of the universe. There dwells the King eternal, immortal, invisible, in a pavilion of light, surrounded by cherubim and seraphim, ministers of state, who stand in His presence, hearken to His voice, ready to execute His commands. The Jews considered Jerusalem their peculiar national glory. The Italians boasted of Rome: its rise, wealth, population, strength, influence. The English are proud of their London, and Americans of their New York. But Christians are denizens of heaven. They were afar off, but are now made nigh by the blood of Christ; and are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. They are forgiven their past treachery and rebellion, absolved from exposure to wrath, enrolled in the city of our God, have a right to all its immunities, and shall have an abundant entrance.

4. *Her members seek the things above.* They declare plainly, 'Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.' They devoutly meditate on the heavenly Jerusalem, talk of it, travel toward it, prepare for it. Our affections are set on things above; our heart and our treasure already are there. We fear lest a promise being made us of entering into rest, we should come short of it. We, by faith, now scale the mount of God. Our hope, as an anchor, is cast within the veil. We rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. To that Jerusalem above with singing we repair.

5. *Many of her members are above.* More there than on earth. Think of the myriads who passed from the suffering Church beneath in the patriarchal age, during the Levitical economy, and since the opening of the Christian dispensation, and its ever-increasing throng of redeemed spirits to join the general assembly and Church of the first-born in heaven. The Bible always speaks of God's people as one embodied host. Part have crossed the flood, and part are crossing now. On earth the Church may be a little flock; in heaven it is a great multitude. But they are not regarded otherwise than in their *spiritual state.* There is no reference to geographical boundaries. They are viewed collectively, as a whole. One Church of God purchased with His own blood, one family we dwell in Him, one Church above, beneath. You are few, but they are many. You are toiling, they are at rest. You wield the sword, but they have palms of victory in their hands, crowns of glory on their heads.

6. *All her members will at last meet above.* The Lord is counting up His jewels. He will bring many sons to glory. Our spirits, too, shall quickly join with theirs in glory crowned. 'Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' Soon we shall meet again when all our toils are over, talk of the dangers to which we have been exposed, and sing of salvation for ever and ever.

II. FREE.

1. *In comparison of the Jewish Church.* The design of the apostle is to warn the Galatians against returning to Judaism; the inconsistency, after having been brought into the liberty of the Gospel, in allowing themselves to be again enthralled. 'Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.' Under the law of Moses they were under restraints, burdened with heavy rites and ceremonies. Christians enjoy true freedom. They were servants, but are now children. God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father. They had been like Hagar, the bondwoman, and Ishmael, her son, who had

no title to the promise, cast out, disowned. The Jews, when Paul wrote, were still in servitude to the law given on Sinai, and were also in bondage to the Romans. Christians are free from Levitical customs and ceremonies, none of which are now binding—all abolished; they have waxed old and vanished away. We have entered on the more glorious dispensation of the Spirit.

2. *Free from the world.* 'Ye are not of the world,' says their Lord, 'even as I am not of the world.' They are free from its hollow and dangerous principles, its low and debasing maxims, its ridiculous and expensive fashions, its guilty and unsatisfying pleasures, its mean pursuits, its smiles and frowns. They have come out from the world, are not conformed to the world, but are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.

3. *Free from sin.* From its *guilt*, for all who believe in Christ are justified from all things. Its *power*, for sin shall not have dominion over you, who are not under the law but under grace. Its *love;* they now hate the garments spotted by the flesh. Its *practice;* for they who are born of God do not commit sin. Its *pollution;* Christ loved the Church, that He might sanctify and cleanse it. When Rome was in her glory the mass of the people were in slavery, under the absolute will of masters, liable to every kind of insult and abuse. The Jews said to Christ, We be Abraham's children, and were never in bondage to any man. This was a falsehood, for they were then under the Roman yoke. But Christ answered, Whoever committeth sin is the slave of sin, bound down by a thousand chains under a tyrant's power, in the snare of the devil, serving divers lusts. But if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed; exult under the mild government of Him whose service is perfect freedom; enjoy a liberty unsung by poets and by senators unpraised.

4. *Free from all civil interference.* Because it is spiritual, founded upon faith, united by love, for the edification of its members in holiness, and for the religious benefit of the world. Its government is spiritual, concerned only with spiritual objects. The human heart is its seat: there Christ erects His throne, sways His sceptre, establishes His kingdom, plants His graces, and carries on His triumphs. 'My kingdom is not of this world.' Then no force must be employed to compel men to enter it, or support it. No pains and penalties must be inflicted on those who refuse, by any civil government, conclave, convocation, or conference. To the Church belongs the power of admitting or excluding members. No minister has any right to exercise authority over the Church that declines his service. From one who teaches false doctrines Christians are to turn away and not bid him God speed. Consciences and souls

were made to be the Lord's alone. None love fetters though they are made of gold.

5. *Free in all action.* To devise plans, put forth energies and make efforts to strengthen her stakes, lengthen her cords, and stretch her curtains, by establishing Sunday-schools, forming Bible and Tract Societies, and by sending ambassadors to the heathen.

6. *Free in all her contributions.* No payment of money must be a condition of membership. Every member must be left to his own judgment and conscience. To his own master he stands or falls. Compulsion would destroy the luxury of doing good, the blessedness of giving. There is not a hint of it in the New Testament. The gifts of God—Christian privileges—cannot be purchased with money. Some who heard Paul at Corinth refused to contribute toward his support. He never, for a moment, thought of expelling them; but he did shame them by saying, These hands minister to my necessities.

III. MATERNAL. She is the mother of us all. The Church is frequently represented as a woman: the bride, the Lamb's wife. Christians are

1. *Born of her.* Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Born, not by education or baptism or mere profession, but from 'above,' of 'the Spirit,' by a spiritual influence. The change is spiritual: not mere reformation of conduct, but transformation of the mind from darkness to light, bondage to liberty, pollution to purity, misery to bliss, giving to the subject of this new birth, new views, new pleasures, new pursuits and new prospects. How the change is wrought we know not, but publish to the sons of men the signs infallible. We are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus; begotten again to a lively hope; we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren; and he that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. The Lord shall count when He writeth up the people, and of Zion, the Church, shall say, 'This and that man was born in her.'

2. *Nourished by her.* As new-born babes they desire the sincere, unadulterated milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. And where shall they get it but in the Church? My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. As soon as the prodigal returns, the fatted calf is killed. But in this mountain, the Church, the Lord of Hosts keeps up a continual feast of fat things, full of marrow, and wines on the lees well refined. The Saviour says, 'My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.' All the ordinances are refreshing. The word is sweeter than honey or the

honeycomb. With joy we draw water out of the wells of salvation. There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of our God. Here your principles are invigorated, resolutions confirmed, graces matured, and prospects brightened of the better world.

3. *Cared for by her.* Trained up in the doctrine and discipline of the Lord. Defended from every foe, protected from every danger. 'A woman may forget her sucking child, yet will I not forget thee, saith the Lord. I, the Lord, do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it I will keep it night and day.' He saved the antediluvian Church amidst the billows of the flood, and protected the patriarchal under the tent of Abraham, and delivered the Jewish from Egypt and Babylon, and has preserved the Christian Church amidst all the persecutions to which she has been exposed. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people. Salvation He appoints for walls and bulwarks. God is known in her palaces for a refuge. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee. Who is he that can harm us if we are followers of that which is good? 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' 'I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

4. *It is the duty of all to love her.* If Jehovah planned the Church, and Christ purchased her with His blood, and the Holy Spirit has taken up His abode in her, then it is both the duty and privilege of all to be united to her, to make a profession of attachment to her, to associate with her members, to share her responsibilities, never to be ashamed of her, ever to respect her, honour her, love her. Love her *Name:* Jerusalem from above. The city of God. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Her *Day:* The queen of days, the brightest of the seven; let it be to you honourable and a delight. Her *House:* I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thy honour dwelleth. How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Her *Ordinances:* A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I sat under her shadow with great delight and her fruit was sweet unto my taste. Her *Word:* Receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save the soul. O how I love Thy law. Love all her *children.* Let there be no family broils. If ye bite and devour one other ye shall be consumed one

of another. Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Where this takes place the joys of heaven are found. Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. There the Lord commanded His blessing, even life for evermore.

5. *To support her.* Jerusalem, my mother dear, often have I seen thy children forsake thee for a stranger; thy house for the tavern, the gay concert, the corrupting theatre. Can you see her dejected, and not be grieved? In want, and not relieve her? Burdened with debt, and not seek to remove it? Her dwellings out of repair, while you dwell in your ceiled houses? Oh! loosen the bands of her neck, take from her the sackcloth, let her be clothed in beautiful garments. Be interested in everything that belongs to her. Take pleasure in her stones and favour the dust thereof. Go round about her, tell her towers, mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, and tell it to the generation following. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

6. *To pray for her.* Fervently, believingly, consistently, and unitedly strive together in prayer for her purity, unity, stability, and triumph. Let there be a joining of all hands, a confederacy of all hearts, and a mingling of all petitions. Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

SERMON XIV.

THE FRUITFULNESS OF THE CHURCH.

'THE CHILDREN WHICH THOU SHALT HAVE, AFTER THOU HAST LOST THE OTHER, SHALL SAY AGAIN IN THINE EARS, THE PLACE IS TOO STRAIT FOR ME: GIVE PLACE TO ME THAT I MAY DWELL.' *Isaiah* xlix. 20.

ISAIAH occupies a lofty station among the writers of the Old Testament. He is the most eloquent, graceful, poetic, and complete. His manner is sublime and dignified. His imagery is rich, but generally borrowed from surrounding objects. His prophecy contains complaints, reproofs, pathos, exultation, and triumph. He is well termed the evangelical prophet. He rose the highest of all the prophets to meet the Sun of Righteousness, and most strikingly portrayed the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. In this chapter he refers to the Jewish Church, and of her enlargement after the Babylonian captivity. But from the mount on which he here stands, scenes more glorious in their accomplishment, and more spiritual in their character, burst upon his vision. It is plain from the references to it in the New Testament, that it was intended to comfort the Christian Church with the assurance that God has not forgotten her; that He has engraven her on the palms of His hands, and that, notwithstanding her many afflictions and discouragements, she shall be greatly increased and enlarged. To the Need, the Duty, and the Encouragement of the Church, we call your prayerful attention.

I. THE CHURCH'S NEED.

1. *An increase of Children.* She has had many bereavements. 'After thou hast lost the other.' Some by *apostasy.* They did run well but Satan hindered them. They have forsaken the God of their salvation, trampled under foot the precious blood of their Redeemer, done despite to the Spirit of grace, quitted the company of saints for sinners, left the temple, perhaps for the tavern, returned to the beggarly elements of the world; so that the light that was in them is become darkness

and their last state worse than the first. The Church has sustained losses by *removals:* sometimes for personal convenience, or worldly profit and pleasure, and their place in the sanctuary where they had been fed and nourished is now vacant. And by *death.* Piety does not exempt from death. The righteous die. Heaven is enriched by their removal, but the Church on earth feels the loss. It is deeply affecting that after the lapse of so many centuries Zion should be only as the watch-tower on the verge of the deep, illuminating her own vicinity, while unmeasured realms of darkness lie beyond. There Satan has his seat, and the smoke of the bottomless pit ascendeth. Many are perishing for lack of knowledge. Profligacy stalks abroad and riots in the public ways. Oaths the most horrid stun you in the streets. Drunkenness abounds. Lying, fraud, and robbery are awfully prevalent. Dancing-rooms, theatres, and drinkeries are crowded. Sunday newspapers and other vicious publications are read by millions. Infidelity, which neutralises every claim of human duty, and every attribute of Deity, triumphs. Multitudes of men around us insult, defy, and forget their Maker; deny, or mock, and falsify His glorious perfections, and employ His great and terrible name to add force to their blasphemies, emphasis to their imprecations, and point to their falsehoods. Because of these things the land mourns, and Zion sits in the dust. By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small? The Church needs an increase of children. Not the mere extension of a name, the prevalence of a sect, the multiplication of proselytes; but of genuine converts; of persons who have heard the clamours of a guilty conscience, borne the burden of sin, shed the tears of penitence, have been shut up unto the faith, fled for refuge to the Saviour, grasped His cross, found redemption in His blood, the forgiveness of their sins, and received the witness of the Holy Spirit to the glorious fact of their adoption into the divine family. We want such living stones to be incorporated into the spiritual building; such soldiers to swell the army of our great Captain, and such travellers to join our blood-besprinkled bands, that when we are asked by what authority we preach, or who gave us this authority, we may triumphantly reply: 'These are our epistles, known and read of all men; written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.' And these to be multiplied daily, until the little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation, and the earth overflowed, and the universe filled with the glory of God.

2. *An increase of Piety.* Many who are within the walls of Zion are at 'ease.' They have settled on their lees; have a name to live, but are dead. They dwell in a dark, cold dreary region, and have no breath in them. They have a profession of religion, but not its living

principles. Their graces are languishing. There is all the dreariness of winter. Or, if they have any discovery of their state, it is only to complain of their leanness. They have the form of godliness, but not the power; the shell, but not the kernel; the carcase, but not the animating spirit. Things eternal are not so interesting to them as things temporal. Divine truth has lost its hold on their minds, and divine ordinances their attraction. Carnal alliances have been formed. The broad features of distinction between the Church and the world have been frittered down to suit the taste, pride, passion, principles and manners of worldly persons, drinking into their spirit, joining in their amusements, imitating them in their voluptuous living, and rivalling them in commercial speculations. Hence the instability of many in the Church. Tossed about with every wind of doctrine, unstable as water, they cannot excel. One day they are up to summer's heat, and soon down again to the freezing-point. In a word, the piety of the Church has not been adequate to the demands of the age and the surrounding emergencies; it has been too external, occasional, superficial, sentimental, and dependent on casual impulse. She has wasted opportunities that can never be recalled; she has been too boastful and self-complacent; her faith has looked more at difficulties than at helps, more at enemies than at God's promise, crying, It shall be done; her hope has wavered when it should have been as an anchor cast within the veil, both sure and steadfast; her love has been cold and weak, when it ought to have been intense, constant, supreme. Her peace might have flowed as a river, and her joy been unspeakable and full of glory. Her devotion might have been more vigorous and warm, and her spirituality more deep-toned. Full-grown Christians have been rare. Few have come up to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Let us not refuse to acknowledge our deficiency, to confess our sins, to mourn over them, to burn with indignation at the sight of them. Let us pant to be brought nearer to God, seek a fresh application of the all-cleansing blood, to renew our engagement to enter into solemn covenant, with broken hearts, streaming eyes and uplifted hands, till light shall break forth from obscurity, new life be infused, inveterate habits broken, the fountain of corruption purified, graces strengthened, and we rise to greater robustness and vigour of Christian character. Religion is progressive. There is first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. It is like the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day. When the Church shall clearly discover her privileges, earnestly desire them, diligently pursue them and richly enjoy them, her beauty shall be as the olive tree, and her smell as Lebanon.

3. *An increase of Unity.* She has been too long wrapped in her selfishness, which has ever a separating influence. All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. Hence strife and divisions. The real weakness of the Church is thus exposed. The religion she professes is one, but she is not one. Those opposed to her are one, but she is not one. She would have others to unite with her, while her own children are not united among themselves. They have provoked one another, but not to love and to good works. They have contended with each other, but not for the faith once delivered to the saints. They have bitten and devoured one another, until, in many instances, they have been consumed one of another. They have violated the command of their Master, failed to imitate His example, and to exhibit the true badge of discipleship. Their love has been narrow, confined, pent-up. It wants to be purified, deepened, intensified, till it shall destroy all envies and jealousies, rise above earthly distinctions, weep with those who weep, rejoice with those who rejoice; and the Church be seen not only essentially but visibly one, ready to receive all whom Christ has received, to love all whom He loves, and to commune with all who enjoy the communion of the Holy Ghost.

4. *Increase of Zeal.* She has known that thousands around her were ignorant of God, and Christ, and salvation, and she has neglected to instruct them. She has seen them dying around her, and has coldly asked, with impious Cain, Am I my brother's keeper? Instead of penetrating with her heaven-kindled light the regions of surrounding darkness, she has oft hid it under a bushel. When cases of distress have met many professors, like the Priest and the Levite they have passed by on the other side. Though Christian privileges, as the light of the sun, the water from the rock, the air we breathe, have been needed by all, suited to all, intended for all, there have been those who have attempted to monopolise them, and left others to perish with hunger when they have had enough and to spare. They have gone on from year to year without making a single effort, or putting themselves to the least inconvenience to get an additional member to the Church, perhaps congratulating themselves that they are very steady, and of a quiet disposition, forgetting that there is quietness among the bodies in the cemetery, just because they are all dead together. Peace is the fruit of conquest, not of ease.

II. The Church's Duty. That she may be enlarged and have a great increase of children, there must be—

1. *Intense Desire.* This will lead her to seek every preparation. Unless you are sanctified you are not fit for the Master's use. If dark,

you cannot enlighten others; if cold you cannot warm; if barren you cannot fertilise them; if deformed you cannot attract. You cannot impart what you do not possess. Your zeal must spring from your piety. Holiness unto the Lord must be your motto. And this cannot be attained without effort. You will never reach it as a matter of course, or by accident. There must be consent, concurrence, and cultivation. As the colour and fragrance of flowers are brought out by the rays of the sun, so the graces of your character are dependent for their beauty and vigour on your communion with God. And as you resemble Him, you will have compassion on the multitudes scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd, and a desire that they be gathered into the fold. Religion will so strengthen, refine, and elevate the sensibilities of nature, will dissolve its ruggedness into kindliness, and open a fountain in hearts, formerly inaccessible to soft emotions. Zion travailed and then brought forth children.

2. *Laborious Effort.* Do not startle if I say *Give liberally.* Money in itself is worthless, but it may be made subservient to important purposes; of erecting Zion's temples, circulating her oracles, supporting and extending her institutions, and of sending missionaries to distant barbarous climes. The remnant of the Jews who returned from captivity in Babylon contributed some four hundred and forty-five thousand dollars toward the rebuilding of Jerusalem; and you, last week, acted worthily of your ancient John Street Church, in presenting your twelve thousand dollars to the Centenary Fund. Freely ye have received, freely give; not grudgingly, or of necessity, but of a willing mind. But do not think to substitute your liberal contributions for personal effort. The harvest is plenteous and the labourers are few. We cannot dispense with the services of any. All are called to labour, all may labour. You cannot serve here by proxy. The Church is not a joint-stock company. Membership weakens no man's responsibility, nor destroys his individuality. All its duties belong to man as an individual, and if you turn your attention from yourselves and fix it on the Church as a community, you weaken her power, disfigure her beauty, counteract her usefulness, and impede her progress. Let no one say he can do nothing. What! have you not a tongue that can speak for the Saviour, hands that can distribute religious tracts, feet that can visit the houses of the poor? Can you not drop a word to a fellow-traveller, reprove the swearer and Sabbath-breaker, invite a neighbour to the sanctuary, or instruct in the Sunday-school? If you have but one talent, you *must* improve it, or like the unprofitable servant be cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

3. *Consistent Behaviour.* The wisest instructions, the largest dona-

tions, the most self-denying efforts, will all fail without a corresponding conduct. The Church is the focus to which the light from heaven converges, and the nucleus whence it radiates through the earth. You must therefore reflect it so as to attract the observation, rivet the attention, and kindle the admiration of those who are yet beyond the walls of Zion. You must exhibit to the world a heavenly disposition, holy conversation, exalted morality, consistent piety. Truth must sparkle in your eyes, love breathe from your lips, and mercy distil from your hands. Show by your gentleness, deadness to the world, sterling integrity, and earnestness in pursuit of salvation, that you believe, feel, enjoy, what you profess. Without this your profession will be a mockery, and your zeal but a bonfire on Zion's heights. You must confirm all you say and do by a holy example.

4. *Fervent Prayer.* 'Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.' Be assured that no resources of wealth, no grandeur of state, no power of oratory can increase the children of the Church. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.' But for this He will be enquired of by the House of Israel to do it for them. Prayer is His appointed means. He has commanded it, hence it becomes a bounden duty: to it He has set the seal of His promise; it is therefore an inestimable privilege. It has been tried and its efficacy established. Moses prayed, and the Lord proclaimed Himself gracious and merciful. Elijah prayed, and a cloud was wafted from the sea to burst in blessings on the land. The disciples prayed, and the house was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and if you pray you shall catch the fire of a purer sphere than was ever hymned in the measures of poetry; you shall move the hand that shakes the heavens and the earth. The superhuman impulse shall be given, the breath of heaven shall concentre its energies from the four winds, and the dead, the slain, the dry shall arise a great army; the living to praise God, as you do at this day.

III. The Church's Encouragement. This rapid enlargement and universal extension of the Church

1. *Is divinely promised.* The promise was coëval with the curse that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. To Abraham: In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Jacob: Unto Shiloh shall the gathering of the people be. David: All the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him. Isaiah: His house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations. Jeremiah: All nations shall be gathered unto it. Daniel: The stone shall become a

great mountain, and fill the whole earth. Joel: I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh. Micah: All people shall flow unto it. Malachi: In every place incense shall be offered, and a pure offering. And He whose right it is hath said, 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.'

2. *God will be glorified.* The Church is His peculiar abode. He loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. He has a work to perform, prophecies to accomplish, purposes to fulfil, enemies to subdue, and a kingdom to establish. He asks your assistance; He commands your aid; 'Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion.' He resents all indifference to His cause; 'Curse ye Meroz, . . . curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.' His glory is displayed in the works of nature, but more illustriously in the operations of His grace; when He influences the minds and changes the hearts of men; maintains and extends His Church against the combined forces of earth and hell. As her children are multiplied, His revenue of glory is increased.

3. *The world will be benefited.* Thousands around us are living without God and without hope; their understandings darkened, wills perverted, passions disordered, consciences tormenting, and death approaching. What is to become of them? They are not likely to be saved while the Church is asleep. They will then think they are justified in their indifference and opposition to religion. But let Zion put on her strength, and she will soon shut the mouth of gainsayers, and put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Their power will be weakened, enquiry will be excited, salvation will be desired, obstacles will be overcome, streets now polluted by iniquity shall be cleansed by streams of righteousness, the temples of Bacchus shall be closed, theatres deserted, tongues that blasphemed God shall sing Hosanna to the Son of David. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree. Christ must reign until all His enemies shall become His footstool. What is Pharaoh, or Nebuchadnezzar, or Sanballat to Him? He will rule them with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces as a potter's vessel. Popery will be hurled as a millstone into the depths of the sea. Mohammedanism extinguished. Paganism utterly destroyed.

4. *The Church will rise in strength, honour, and glory.* Her sackcloth will be cast aside; her worldly alliances broken off. Truth will sit enthroned in her affections. In the beauties of holiness shall she be arrayed. Her sons shall come from far, and her daughters shall be nursed at her side. A nation shall be born to her in a day. With astonishment

and delight she exclaims, Who hath begotten me these? For purity, stability, unity, glory, and extent she has become a praise in the earth. The Gentiles come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising.

> 'Praise is in all her gates; upon her walls,
> And in her streets, and in her spacious courts
> Is heard salvation. From every clime they come
> To see thy beauty and to share thy joy,
> O Zion! An assembly such as earth
> Saw never, such as heaven stoops down to see.'

SERMON XV.

CHRIST'S LAST SAYING ON THE CROSS.

'IT IS FINISHED.'—*John* xix. 30.

IN reading the lives of illustrious individuals whose names are stamped with renown on the historic pages, we naturally feel solicitous to know what were their last sayings; how they finished their course and took their departure from this scene of labour. But never was there a life so remarkable and eventful as the life of Christ; a life that was intended to be the pattern and the price of ours. Everything connected with such a life excites peculiar interest; but the circumstances which took place at the close of it demand particular attention. These are recorded at great length, by Matt. xxv. 33–54. John says, v. 28: 'Jesus knowing that all things were accomplished,' He said—and it appears from the other evangelists that He said it with an exceeding loud voice, to intimate the importance of the saying, and perhaps to show that His strength was not exhausted, but that He was about voluntarily to give up His life—He said, 'It is finished.'

In this exclamation our Lord doubtless referred to the great work of human redemption. Not that He confined Himself to some one particular, but meant that everything that referred to His death was then finished. The same word is used in v. 28. So Christ says in one passage, John vi. 38, that 'He came to do the will of Him that sent Him,' which will included many important particulars; for He says in another text, v. 36, 'The works which the Father gave Me to finish, I do:' all of which bore upon the interesting work of redemption. It was with reference to all the parts of this great work that He said, in the hearing of His disciples, the night before He was crucified, 'I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do:'—and now that He hangs upon the cross, a spectacle to God, to angels, to men, to devils, He, just as He expires, exclaims, 'It is finished.'

I. THE IMPORT OF THIS SAYING. We conceive it signifies

That His sufferings were ended. He was a sufferer. For weight, number, acuteness, never were any sufferings like unto His sufferings.

His whole life from the manger to the cross was one continued scene of suffering—a journey of strenuousness and toil. He was oft hungry, thirsty, weary, homeless, houseless, friendless. Torrents of abuse were hurled upon Him. His enemies charged Him with gluttony, drunkenness, sedition, blasphemy. They said He had a devil. Herod 'sought His life,' 'the Pharisees took counsel how they might take Him and put Him to death,' the multitude 'took up stones to stone Him.' They were bent upon His death, and they succeeded. He is betrayed, seized, bound, dragged to the hall of Caiaphas, then to the tribunal of Pilate. He is falsely accused and unjustly condemned, denied by one disciple, forsaken by the rest. He is blindfolded, mocked, spat upon, smitten on the cheek, scourged on the back, and His head crowned with thorns. But they clamour for His blood,—'away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him, crucify Him.' He bears His cross, He faints beneath the load; they transfix His tender limbs; and, like a malefactor, between two thieves, they crucify Him. Nor does even this their wrath assuage. They pass by, wagging their heads with cruel delight; they taunt, they mock, they glory in His sufferings. Now also is 'the hour and the power of darkness'; the hosts of hell beset Him, and what is more astonishing still, it 'pleased the Father to bruise Him.' Amidst this accumulation of suffering, bodily and mental,—'a weight of woe upon Him'—He hung for hours, a spectacle to the universe. His anguish becomes more and more intense—darkness overspreads the land—He utters a piercing cry, a short pause ensues, the scene closes, and he utters not the faint despairing cry of the vanquished, but the shout of a conqueror, 'It is finished:' My sufferings are ended, My enemies can do no more. And He bowed His head for a better crown. The Light of the World underwent a temporary obscuration, only to shine forth again in His native splendour.

That the predictions concerning Him were fulfilled. You are not to regard the death of Christ as a fortuitous event. It was effected indeed by the envy, the jealousy, the malice, the cruelty, the free volitions of Jews and Romans, yet was it foreknown and appointed 'by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.' And as the efficacy of it was to extend backward, as well as forward—for He was 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world'—so was it made known unto His servants: they beheld it in the visions of God. 'To Christ gave all the prophets witness.'

And not only was it predicted from the fall of our first parents to the period that the vision was sealed, that Messiah should die, but the most minute circumstances connected with His death were foretold, all of which were to receive their exact accomplishment.

It was predicted that His own familiar friend, in whom He trusted, who did eat of His bread, should lift up his 'heel against Him.' And did not Judas, who dipped his hand with Him in the dish, betray Him for thirty pieces of silver?

Was it written, '*I will smite the Shepherd?*' 'And all His disciples forsook Him and fled.'

'*Led as a lamb to the slaughter.*' And did He utter a murmuring word?

'*That they should pierce His hands.*' And did they not crucify Him?

'*That He should be numbered with the transgressors.*' And did they not hang Him between two thieves?

That His foes should taunt Him with 'He trusted in God.' And so they did.

That they should part His garments. And so they did.

That they should give Him vinegar. And so they did.

That the typical dispensation was abolished. For it was 'a shadow of good things to come.' Its numerous types and symbols were intended to prefigure and introduce this great event. Here was the point to which they all tended and verged, the centre in which they all met and received their accomplishment. The ten thousand slaughtered victims had no meaning, no virtue in them, for 'it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin;' they had no significancy, no efficacy, but as they referred to Christ. Do you read of their *paschal lamb?* It prefigured Christ our Passover. Of their *scapegoat* who bore away their sins into the wilderness? It represented Him 'who taketh away the sin of the world.' Of their *brazen serpent?* It typified Him who was lifted up. Of the *smitten rock?* That rock was Christ. Did *Abraham* lay *Isaac* on the altar? 'God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.'

Every remarkable circumstance, every distinguished individual of that dispensation directly or indirectly referred to the events of Calvary. Without the death of Christ the whole economy would have remained a pompous and unmeaning institution.

When Christ expired at the ninth hour, three in the afternoon, the time of offering the evening sacrifice, when the priest would be standing before the altar, in the presence of the concourse assembled on the occasion of the great Festival, when the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and Christ exclaimed, 'It is finished,' every symbol received an explanation, every rite assumed a significancy, every type met its antitype, every shadow was lost in its substance.

'It is finished,' the Messiah cries. Jewish altars, ye need no longer

smoke; victims, ye need no longer bleed; priest, put off your sacerdotal robes, for ye need no longer officiate; the glory departs from between the cherubim, 'the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, is abolished,' sacrifices, rites, types, and symbols have met and received their consummation; and now behold Moses and Aaron and all the prophets and priests, having paid homage, retiring from the cross like twinkling stars, hiding their heads, having ushered in the resplendent sun.

That Jehovah was satisfied. God is a Being of infinite perfections, and being infinite they are essential, and being essential they are immutable, and must therefore be always in perfect harmony among themselves. He never acts from one of them exclusively, but in the infinite unity of them all.

When man sinned, the difficulty was not to induce God to pity him, to love him, to desire his salvation; but how this could be effected without tarnishing His other perfections, how He could be 'a just God and a Saviour,' how He could 'declare His righteousness in the remission of sins,' how both the law and the criminal could be magnified and made honourable, how God's word could be fulfilled: 'In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,' and yet man escape the penalty; how He could show His infinite abhorrence of sin, and yet at the same save the sinner. This was the knot which would have puzzled the wisdom of men and angels to untie. Jesus undertook to do it. 'Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me.' And now the moment is arrived for the solution of the difficulty. 'Mercy and truth are to be brought together, righteousness and peace are to kiss each other.'

Around the cross they all stand and wait in strange suspense the issue. There stands *Justice* and sternly demands, 'Pay me what thou owest'; and *Mercy*, with outstretched arms, says, 'Suffer Him not to go down to the pit, for I have found out a ransom'; and there, too, stands *Truth*, immutable, saying, 'Heaven and earth may pass away, but My word shall not pass away'; and there is spotless *Holiness* declaring, 'Sin is the abominable thing which I hate.'

And there hangs *Jesus*, the Almighty's Fellow, with infinite perfections to meet infinite demands—infinite merit to atone for infinite demerits—infinite strength to bear an infinite load; infinite respect and submission to a law of infinite excellency; an infinite gift of infinite love, an infinite exhibition of the infinite hatred of infinite holiness. What could there be more? Here were infinite qualifications for the work undertaken. And now the hour is come, the work is completed, the *Mighty One* exclaims, 'It is finished;' and *Justice* repeats, 'It is finished;' and *Mercy* re-echoes, 'It is finished;' and *Truth* reiterates,

'It is finished;' and *Holiness* shouts, 'It is finished.' All are satisfied. For not one is abandoned, tarnished, obscured—all are upheld, vindicated, displayed; they mingle their beams and shine forth in united splendour. Their voices, however discordant when *alone*, here united form a chorus more melodious than the music of the spheres.

That man's redemption was accomplished. This was the chief, the great, the benevolent, the ultimate end of all His sufferings. 'A truth so strange, 'twere bold to think it true.' For it is written, 'Christ once suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them to God.' 'He bore our sins and carried our sorrows.' 'He was bruised for our iniquities, He was wounded for our transgressions.' The punishment due to the unnumbered sins of the human race was laid on Him, and 'He heaved the mountain from a guilty world.'

While Jehovah was satisfied, the *apostate spirit* and his marshalled hosts were chagrined, disappointed, confounded, defeated. He 'bruised the serpent's head' and 'spoiled principalities and powers.' Then also did He inflict a deadly wound on the *monster death*, struck the sceptre from his hand, and extracted his sting.

The gates of hell closed, and the portals of paradise opened to all believers; the flaming *cherubims*, that guarded the tree of life, sheathed their swords, invited us to enter, to 'take, eat, and live for ever.'

Christ saw all these things when He uttered the words of the text. He saw that by His death a plan would be accomplished whereby men would be awakened, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

He beheld His blood flowing from one side of the hill, backward, to atone for Adam's sin, and from the other side, flowing onwards to the end of time. He saw beneath His cross the nations waiting for His law. He knew that He should have 'the heathen for His inheritance,' and that His 'name should continue as long as the sun. In man's redemption, however dreadful My sufferings, I shall see of the travail of My soul, and be satisfied. For this joy I endure the cross, I weep that he may smile, I die that he may never die,' and He exclaimed, 'It is finished.'

And it was heard in every part of the universe. It made heaven's high arches ring, and angels shouted for joy. It reverberated its echo through the dungeon horrible, on all sides round; and devils felt that their damnation was for ever sealed, and earth felt the sound,

> 'And nature then, through all her works,
> Gave sign of joy, that all was gained.'

And paradise regained became the burden of her song.

II. THE INFLUENCE IT SHOULD HAVE ON YOU. And surely you will allow me to say

It should excite in you deep attention. If this does not deserve attention we ask what does? What in trade, in commerce, in arts, in science, in the rise and fall of empires? We challenge you to find a saying in the writings of historians, of moralists, of poets, of philosophers, of statesmen, of equal importance to this. We challenge you to find an event that transpired, on any day, in any year, during any century of the world's history, of equal interest and importance to that which took place during the ninth hour, on Calvary. We challenge you to find another spot in the universe in which there is such a display of love and grief, of humility, of fortitude, as on yonder cross. We challenge you to show that ever such extraordinary circumstances took place during the last hours of any of the mighty recorded on the page of history, as those that were witnessed when Messiah died. Why, this is the scene which threw the ancient prophets into transport when they beheld it in the visions of God, that Abraham saw afar off and was glad, on which angels gaze with deep attention. Here it is that man may see God and live. Tell us not that you see Him in all that is beautiful and majestic in nature, if you turn away from the cross. There is far more of God to be seen here than either in the heavens above or in the earth beneath. More of God to be seen on the hill of crucifixion than on the Mount of Transfiguration. Shall I say that there is more of God to be seen on Calvary than had been seen on Mount Zion above.

Who can doubt but the subject *deserves attention?* Then I ask what attention have you paid it? Some of you have thought about it very occasionally, and very carelessly, and some, I fear, have not thought about it at all, not five minutes seriously all your days. It is of such the Saviour speaketh, 'Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of His fierce anger.' And do you intend still to be indifferent to Him? Rather let your right hand forget its cunning. Rather let shame burn your cheek to cinder. To whatever you turn your attention, whatever you study, attend to, think upon that expiring exclamation, 'It is finished.'

It should beget in you godly sorrow. It is not enough that you give it an attentive ear, that you make it the subject of your study, that you coldly gaze upon the tragic scene; 'They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced.' The exclamation should cover you with shame and confusion of face, and overwhelm you with brokenness and contrition of heart. We charge you with having murdered the Son of God. Your sins crucified the Lord of life and glory. Turn the edge of your resent-

ment against them rather than against the Jews. *Your sins* were the nails that pierced His hands. And can you know this, and not sorrow for sin? What, unaffected still? And is the veil still on your heart? The sun beheld it? No! And can you gaze unmoved? Does the earth quake, and are you insensible? Are the rocks rent? and is your spirit unbroken? Do the dead arise? and are you yet asleep in your sins? If the expiring cry of Jesus does not move you, nothing else can. If the means here employed do not answer the end, God has none more powerful to bring to bear upon your temper and character; and when sinking into hell, *you* will say, 'It is finished. I've done the deed, I've ruined my soul, I've placed myself out of the reach of salvation.' But why will ye die? Look once more and may the sight affect your heart.

It should produce in you unshaken confidence. Confidence in Him as the true Messiah. What stronger testimonies could have been given of His Messiahship? He had indeed opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf, made the tongue of the dumb to sing. But still, had there been no prodigies witnessed at His death, His enemies would have continued to insult Him with, 'He saved others.' Just then, when they were about to proclaim Him an impostor, all nature is summoned to the proof of His Messiahship.

Arguments and reasons are not addressed to their judgments, but appeals made to their senses and feelings.

The sun is covered with sackcloth, the veil of the temple is rent in twain, the solid rocks are riven asunder, the sepulchres are burst open, the dead come forth and walk into the holy city. Tell us, what stronger testimonies could have been furnished? The Roman centurion, who presided at the execution, said, 'Certainly this was a righteous man, truly this was the Son of God.'

But there must be a personal application of the Atonement, an entire reliance upon it.

It is not enough that you frequent Calvary's heights, and listen to the sacrificial groans of the Saviour. Some of you have long done that, and yet are unpurged and unforgiven. You are going down to hell, I fear, like the reviling thief at His side, and the insulting mob at His feet, within sight of the blood that flows to bring you to heaven. You must perish if you will not come to Him. That declaration stands point blank against you. 'He that believeth *not* is condemned already.'

Penitent, what encouragements to believe. Hear Him, 'It is finished.' Behold His hands, His feet, His side. Drop the spear of unbelief, make an effort. Dare to believe. Cry out in the exercise of faith,

'There as my Surety, Jesus, my Lord, do I see!
On Him my sins were laid,
And for me the debt He paid,
When He groaned, and expired on the tree.'

Believer, remember that when this saying was uttered there was a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.

'His side an open fountain is,
Where all may freely go.'

His blood cleanseth from *all* sin. Plead it till, like a wave, it comes over your soul, and washes you whiter than snow.

In temptation, affliction, death, remember who has said, 'It is finished.'

It should awaken in you ardent gratitude. 'Oh, sing unto the Lord a new song, for with His right hand and His holy arm hath He gotten Himself the victory.' But He hath given it to us.

'Bound, every heart, and every bosom, burn.'

Evince your gratitude by obedience. 'Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.' Then let us keep the feast. As nations commemorate events in which they glory by public acts, by days set apart for the purpose, let us commemorate the event of Calvary in the holy sacrament. So He enjoined 'the same night in which He was betrayed.' 'Do this in remembrance of Me.' Here then is the test of your gratitude. Oh say, 'I will go unto the altar of God, unto the altar of God my exceeding joy.' And there He will meet with you, and repeat the saying, 'It is finished.'

And when you have conquered, through the blood of the Lamb, and dying, find your latest foe under your feet at last, *you* shall say, 'It is finished.' And then your departed friends, who will be waiting to embrace you, shall shout, 'It is finished. And then as you pass through the gates, cherubim and seraphim shall chant, 'It is finished.' And *then*, 'when saints and angels join,' ten thousand times ten thousand shall form the chorus, 'It is finished.' 'Salvation, glory and honour be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever, Amen.'

SERMON XVI.

THE WOMAN DRUNKEN WITH THE BLOOD OF THE SAINTS—

BEING AN EXPOSURE OF POPERY.*

'AND UPON HER FOREHEAD WAS A NAME WRITTEN, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. AND I SAW THE WOMAN DRUNKEN WITH THE BLOOD OF THE SAINTS, AND WITH THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS OF JESUS.'—*Rev.* xvii. 5, 6.

LAST December, two Jesuitical priests from Rome were employed on a mission for eighteen days in Newcastle. 'From early dawn till after midnight the good fathers sat in their confessionals, patiently and kindly listening to the sorrows of the loaded bosom, when "out of many hearts thoughts were revealed," advising, prescribing, comforting.' About 1800 persons received the communion. 'Many and many,' said the accredited popish organ, 'have made their peace with God, who had abandoned Him for long, long years, and forty-six Protestants have been guided, by God's grace, into "the one fold of the one Shepherd." At the forty hours' devotion to the blessed sacrament, upwards of a thousand wax candles (many of them a single one to the pound), incense, artificial flowers, evergreens to adorn the pillars, &c., &c., were carried to the church in absolute heaps. The piety of the ladies furnished beautiful banners of silk, &c., a rich canopy of satin, and a throne for the exhibition of the blessed sacrament. This munificence of the congregation enabled the clergy to conduct the forty hours' devotion in a style of splendour and magnificence, that has never been equalled in this country, since the "ages of faith." For four whole days the Lamb sat enthroned on the high altar, on and around which 220 candles burnt unceasingly, exclusive of those carried in procession, which amounted to upwards of seventy. Next came the administration of baptism—twenty-three were washed in the laver of regeneration. Two sermons were preached on devotion to our blessed Lady. The exertions of the

* Preached at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, April 16th, 1846.

holy missionaries have awakened a new spirit in the Catholics of this town.'

The papists are, without doubt, increasingly active. Their publications are given away in the public streets. The priest at Blaydon has been preaching for several weeks on their peculiar dogmas; has been inviting, by placards, Protestants to his chapel, and challenging them to a controversy; it cannot, therefore, be deemed unseasonable, if I attempt briefly to expose the mummeries, absurdities, and idolatries of the popish system.

I. Popish Infallibility. The papists assert that their Church is infallible, that it cannot err in faith or morals, and that all other Churches are guided by the spirit of darkness, and sunk in damnable errors. But they cannot tell *whence* this infallibility is derived, *how* it came, nor with *whom* it is deposited. The Jesuits say that the Pope is infallible, and is not bound by any laws of the Church, nor by any decrees of councils, but that *he* is the supreme law-giver. Many of the popish doctors and synods have denied the infallibility of the Pope; and many of the Popes have denied this divine prerogative. Some of their renowned doctors place infallibity in a general council; others say it is in a general council, if the Pope be at its head. Others assert that it is in the bishops, as the representatives of the Church. Others persist in attributing it to the Church collectively, embracing all Christians. Here we have confusion worse confounded. Men are affirmed to be infallible, when they themselves have denied it; and in matters of faith and morals have directly contradicted each other. Pope Sixtus V. published a Bible, which he said was true, legitimate, authentic, and undoubted. Pope Clement VII. suppressed it, and published another of his own, with 3000 corrections. Many of these infallible Popes have been notorious thieves, magicians, murderers, whoremongers, and perjurers. And when the papists say that infallibility is in a general council, they are not agreed as to what makes a general council. Some reckon eighteen general councils, and some at most but eight. Councils have frequently decided contrary to one another; and not unfrequently taught doctrines absurd, unjust, blasphemous, and subversive of the peace and welfare of society. When the papists affirm that infallibility only resides in a council confirmed by the Pope, they attempt to make an infallible body out of two fallibles! Popish infallibility is what the primitive Churches never claimed; it deprives Christians of the use of their reason, and places itself between them and their Redeemer; it is founded on a series of suppositions, doubts, and evasions, and requires sophistry to support it: it may consist with the grossest immorality, and

is peculiarly calculated to produce error, and to perpetuate it from age to age: and it throws endless difficulties in the way of an enquirer, who, before he can be free from error, must be as infallible as his priest.

The papists talk much about the *ancient Fathers*, and, indeed, affirm that Scripture is to be interpreted according to their unanimous consent. But the papists know well that many false books were issued in the names of the Fathers; that their writings have been corrupted; that many of them are lost, and that others contain doctrines the most erroneous and dangerous. Clemens Alexandrinus taught that Christ felt no hunger or thirst: Hilary declared that Christ had no sorrow: and John Damascene, that Christ prayed only in appearance. They also know that many of their own councils have decreed numerous matters contrary to the decisions of the Fathers: and that the Fathers very frequently contradict each other. But it would be found, on an impartial examination of the early Fathers, that they are generally on the side of the Protestant, and against the Romish faith. And the papists are so conscious of this, that they have mutilated the writings of the Fathers, and made them utter sentiments they never held. The Inquisitors blotted from the works of Chrysostom the words—'The Church is not built on the man, but on the faith.' And—'There is no merit but what is given us by Christ.' From the writings of Cyril these words were erased: 'Jesus dwells by faith in our hearts.' And from Epiphanius the words 'not to adore the creature.' And in the preface of Augustine, published at Venice, it is said, 'We have taken care that all things which could affect the minds of the faithful with heretical pravity, be taken away.' The reason of such erasures is plainly seen. But, however sound some of the Fathers were, they were but fallible men, and we must go from their writings to the Holy Scriptures, the pure and refreshing fountain of truth. 'All flesh is grass: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.'

Popery, at the Council of Trent, affirmed that 135 volumes of traditions, &c., are of equal authority with the word of God; and that all saving truth is not contained in the Holy Scriptures. But Jehovah says, 'Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you.' 'The Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation.' While the common people, among the papists, are prohibited reading the Scriptures; Christ says to all, 'Search the Scriptures.' And the Apostle Paul—'I charge you that this Epistle be read to *all* the holy brethren.' Pope Leo XII. called the Bible circulated by Protestants a 'Gospel of the Devil.' Pope Pius VII., June 29, 1816, called the Bible Society 'a crafty device, a pestilence, a defilement of the faith, impious machinations, wickedness, and a nefarious scheme, prepared for men's everlasting ruin.'

The popish bishops in Ireland, in 1824, charged their flocks to surrender to their parish priests all copies of the Scriptures received from Bible Societies; and that at the command of the Pope every papist is required to declare that the clergy are the only interpreters of the Scriptures; and that he will receive the Scriptures according to that sense which the holy Mother Church doth hold. But Paul says to every Christian: 'Prove all things;' and John says, '*Try* the spirits (or teachers) whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.'

II. POPISH TRANSUBSTANTIATION. This was invented in the twelfth century. The Council of Trent, which was held from 1545 to 1563, passed the following canon; 'Whoever shall deny that in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist there are truly, really, and substantially contained the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, together with His soul and divinity, and consequently Christ entire; but shall affirm that He is present therein only a sign and figure, or by His power, let him be accursed.'

I have obtained copies of the catechisms, missals, and other popish works, published by 'lawful authority,' and now used at the popish chapels in Newcastle. In the catechism it is asserted, that 'Christ is present in the Eucharist, by the true and real presence of His divine and human nature, and not in figure only, as heretics would have it.'

The impartial reader must see the monstrous absurdity of all this. 1. That cannot be really the flesh and blood of Christ, that has all the colour, size, weight, taste, and other qualities of bread and wine. 2. It is perfectly absurd to suppose, though the papists affirm it, that should a mouse devour a consecrated wafer, it would really eat the body of Christ. 3. The papists affirm that the bread which Christ brake, and commanded His disciples to eat, was not bread, but truly and really His *dead body*. 4. The papists believe that Christ held in His hand the blood, bones, sinews, &c., of His own body, and His soul and divinity, and that He gave all this to His disciples to eat. 5. The papists say, that the disciples believed that they ate the body of Christ, when they saw that body before them, and that they drank His blood, when they knew that blood was still in His veins; and that, though the law forbade eating human flesh. 6. The papists believe that the body of Christ continually undergoes corruption, by the necessary process of digestion; though the Holy Scriptures declare that His body shall see no corruption. 7. The papists require us to believe what flatly contradicts our senses; and to worship, under pain of damnation, what our sight, touch, smell, and taste tell us is bread and wine, as very God Almighty. 8. In most

languages there is scarcely any expression more common than 'this is,' for 'this represents,' or 'this signifies.' So, 'this is (means this *represents*) my body.' As, 'The seven kine are (that is, *represent*) seven years.' 'This is (that is, *represents*) the bread of affliction.' 'That rock was (that is, *represented*) Christ.' 9. Paul shows that the bread and wine remained unchanged after consecration, for five times they call that 'bread' which they did eat. 1 Cor. x. 16, 17; xi. 26, 28. It is thus perfectly plain, that those 1800 persons who have received, in the popish chapels, Newcastle, within the last few weeks, bread as the entire Christ, and worshipped and adored the same, have been guilty of gross absurdity, idolatry, and contradiction of the word of God.

III. POPISH MASS. This is celebrated with ceremonies fanciful, pantomimical, irrational, unscriptural, superstitious, and blasphemous. 1. Can anything be more ridiculous than to see a number of priests arrayed in vestments of white, red, green, purple, and black, more becoming mountebanks than ministers of the meek and lowly Jesus. 2. This mass is celebrated in the forenoon, with *lighted candles*, and in the Latin tongue, which is unintelligible to the people and contrary to Scripture. 1 Cor. xiv. 19. 3. The papists say, that the sacrifice of Christ is *daily* offered in the mass; while, on the contrary, the Bible declares that 'Christ was *once* offered. Christ *once* appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Christ by *one* offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' 4. The papists contradict themselves when they say, The wine is turned into blood, and yet that the sacrifice offered in the mass is *without* blood. 5. The Pope, in 1844, received about £12,000, to say a single mass for the mother of Colonel Dyce Sombre. What imposition! The Bible offers all the benefits of the sacrifice of Christ to all, without money and without price. 6. The popish priests know that Christ did institute the eucharist in the species of bread *and* wine, and yet they refuse to administer it to the people in both kinds. 7. The 1800 papists who recently received the sacrament in this town had the wine withheld from them, contrary to the institution of Christ. He says, 'Drink ye *all* of this.' The Evangelist Mark declares, 'And they *all* drank of it.' And the Apostle Paul directs, 'Eat of that bread, and *drink* of that cup.' The people are therefore deprived of that which is the special memorial of the sacrificial death of Christ. 'He took the cup, saying, This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.' 8. The people were *first* sacrilegiously deprived of the cup in the sacrament, by the Council of Constance in 1416. Is it not plain to every attentive reader of the Scriptures, that the people who are denied the cup do *not* receive the

Lord's Supper at all? 9. If the bread, it is said, be not made chiefly of wheat, or if it be made of distilled water, or if it be corrupted, or if the words be not properly spoken, or if he who consecrates be not a lawful priest, there is no sacrament. How is it possible for any one to know that all this has been observed? 10. The papists are idolators: for an idolator is one who worships that as God which is no God; and certainly that which the papists worship is no God, it is but a wafer—a piece of bread: when, therefore, they fall down and pray to it, 'Thou art my God,' they are guilty of idolatry. A priest in Ireland lately went into a cabin, and having made a wafer with flour, water, and scissors, he said, 'Whoever will not believe this to be the very body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ will be damned to all eternity.' 11. The Romish Church curses men for not worshipping a god of its own manufactory, that may be eaten by rats and mice: the Bible condemns men for worshipping gods that may be cast to the 'moles and bats.'

IV. POPISH BAPTISM. The papists affirm: 1. That the twenty-three persons recently baptized in Newcastle were thereby washed in the laver of regeneration. The Council of Florence declares that the efficacy of baptism is such as to remit original and actual guilt, however enormous. Peter Dens says, that 'Baptism is the origin of spiritual life.' The Bible, on the contrary, says, 'We have redemption through the *blood of Christ*, the forgiveness of our sins.' Again, 'To as many as received Christ, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.' Eph. i. 7., John i. 12. 2. The papists make baptism and regeneration inseparable. But the Scriptures declare that Simon Magus, *after* his baptism, was 'in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.' Acts viii. 23. The people of Samaria, who were baptized by Philip, did not receive the Holy Ghost until *some time after* their baptism. Acts viii. 12-17. And it is plain that there were persons who were regenerated *before* they were baptized. Acts x. 47. 3. The papists consider that the oil, salt, spittle, and insufflation employed by them in baptism possess the power of conferring sacred things. Peter Dens says, 'that ceremonies in the use of sacraments are calculated to repress the power of the devil, lest he should prevent the sacramental effect.' The Scriptures know nothing of such absurd rites. 4. The papists say, 'Without baptism children are born to eternal misery and everlasting destruction.' Christ says, 'Suffer little children to come unto Me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' 5. The papists baptized mad people, abortives and monsters, and say that all who have been baptized, when they grow up to maturity, are to be *compelled* to lead a Christian life, even by *punishments*. The Scriptures give no countenance to such a practice. 6. Popery, for ages, has been justly designated, 'The

deceivableness of unrighteousness,' and noted for her 'lying wonders.' A popish priest lately wrote from Polynesia thus: 'The children had diseases. We cut their hair, and washed their heads; we did this that we might the more easily baptize them, *without their parents perceiving what we did.* This is the way I manage: I have always about me one little phial of scented water, and a second with pure water. I throw at first some of the scented water on the child's head, under pretence of giving it ease, and while the pleased mother rubs it, I change the phial, and pour on the regenerating water, without her having any suspicion.' What consummate imposture! The popish priests at Girgenti, in Sicily, lately exhibited a letter, which they state to have been written by the *Devil* to a monk! And very recently the priests of Messina pretended to have a letter which they said was written by the Virgin Mary, consenting to be the perpetual protectress of that city! I must mention only another instance. On August 18th, 1844, Dr. Arnoldi, Bishop of Treves, who was in want of money to complete the towers of the cathedral, announced that he would exhibit the *seamless coat of Christ.* It is calculated that one million two hundred thousand persons arrived at Treves in six weeks. These deluded people actually offered their devotions to this relic, exclaiming 'Holy coat, pray for us,' and the like.

V. Popish Confession. The papists mean by confession, not a confession to God, nor to an injured person, nor to the Church in cases of public scandal, but private confession to a priest, which it calls auricular, because it is whispered in his ear. *This* confession, they say, is a necessary part of repentance, is indispensable to salvation, must be performed by every man and woman, and that the neglecters of it are to be denied Christian burial. They believe that the priest has the power of *forgiving sin*, not ministerially but judicially; not by praying to God on behalf of a penitent, but as a judge or governor, pronouncing him pardoned. They say there is no sin however grievous, no crime however enormous, which a priest, though he may be a most licentious character himself, cannot forgive. Thus, a man who cannot comprehend the evil of sin, nor know the hearts of the applicants, and who is himself a sinner and needs pardon, is made to possess the power to forgive the sins of others. Can anything be more absurd and blasphemous? In support of their opinion the papists quote John xx. 23. But this means, 'Whosesoever sins ye remit,' according to the tenor of the Gospel: that is, supposing they repent and believe: 'they are remitted.' The power with which popish priests think themselves invested was never claimed by the apostles of our Lord: they said to persons awakened, 'Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;'

and, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' To forgive sins is the inalienable prerogative of Deity. 'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions, for Mine own sake,' Isa. xliii. 25. 'Who can forgive sins but God only?' Mark ii. 7. 'God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you,' Eph. iv. 32.

At the very time that the *confessionals* in Newcastle were crowded with persons anxious to pour the sorrows of their loaded bosoms into the ears of the 'good fathers who sat patiently and kindly listening,' a priest in Dublin was exposing their foul abominations. On the 30th day of December the Rev. Roderick Ryder publicly abjured the errors of Romanism, and was admitted into the Protestant Church, having produced the most satisfactory testimonials as to unblemished character and superior ability from four bishops of the Romish Church, of which he had been a zealous priest for eleven years. In the letter to his late bishop he writes: 'Now, regarding your practice of auricular confession, I shall merely state facts, which I know by eleven years' experience. All your theologians admit that it is not of divine institution, or, in other words, that it was invented by man. That is one fact. The second is, that I know it to be conducive to the most debasing system of debauchery and licentiousness. I know that questions are asked and answered in the confessional of a character revolting to a pure and virtuous female. Hence the general outcry against the immorality of priests. I could not sit for one half hour in the house of any intelligent Roman Catholic, that the conduct of Father Tim, Father Tom, Father Mick, would not be brought on the *tapis*. And *I believe that three-fourths of the complaints have their origin in the confessional.* The priest has a species of access to females which no other man can have; he is held in a certain degree of respect, in which no other man is held; he is believed to have the power of forgiving whatever sins he may commit, which no other man has. All these privileges are dangerous in the hands of a man who may be inclined to avail himself of them. The scandal that would follow, the disgrace of a whole family, the respect entertained for the priest, and sometimes the attachment of the victim to the culprit are powerful preventives against exposure. If the victim move in humble life she is generally shipped off to America, or married to some servant or needy relative, who is always ready at hand. I know three poor girls who were shipped off last season, by one man, under such circumstances. The people are beginning to open their eyes, yet they do not know the one-tenth of what passes, but they see enough. They see the description of servants that some of their priests keep, the intimacies which they form with pious old maids of equivocal character, the dissipated manners which they betray, and the rakish tours which

they take occasionally; and they would be as blind as bats not to see these.'

Such is the exposure which an ear-witness has made of the impurity of the confessional, within the last few weeks. The correctness of the statement will not be doubted by any one who has read the account of the confessional in Dens' Theology. It furnishes the most polluting obscenity, such as no chaste husband can wish his wife, or no mother her daughter, to be a witness of. Yet popery says, that auricular confession was instituted by divine command, and is necessary to salvation, and that the person who goes to the confessional must allow no 'foolish bashfulness' to prevent the confession of every sin, even sins of desire, and to say 'I confess to Almighty God, to the blessed Virgin Mary, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to John Baptist, Peter and Paul, to all the saints, and to you, father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed.' The priest also takes an oath that he will not reveal anything said in confession, though it be to avoid the greatest evil, such as the robbery of a neighbour, the murder of the Queen, or the overthrow of the constitution. The confessional is therefore not only corrupting both to priests and people, but dangerous to the civil interests of society, and opposed to the Holy Scripture.

VI. Popish Purgatory. The papists affirm that near to hell there is a fire of purgatory, in which the souls of good men are cleansed by a temporary punishment, some for a year, and some for one or two hundred years, in order to be admitted into heaven. They say that the works of the faithful on earth may shorten the sufferings of the souls in purgatory; hence they have among them 'spiritual associations, for the relief of souls in purgatory.' Augustine justly observes, 'We read of heaven and of hell, but the third place (purgatory) we are utterly ignorant of; yea, we find it is not in the Scriptures. As the last day of a man's life finds him, so the last day of the world shall hold him: nor is there for anybody a third place, for he who is not with Christ must be with the devil.' Purgatory, then, is a mere fable, either collected from the spurious writings, canonised by superstition and ignorance, or it is the offspring of visionaries, who imported it from heathenism. It confounds time with eternity, the probationary state with the unchangeable state. It makes sufferings, which are the consequences of sin, to destroy sin, which is absurd, for an effect cannot destroy its cause. It has been invented as a rich source of revenue in the 'merchandise of souls;' it gives the greatest encouragement to sin; reflects on the all-sufficiency of the atonement of Christ, insults the wisdom, faithfulness, and goodness of God, and is in direct opposition to the following

and numerous other passages of Scripture. John viii. 22-24. Luke xxiii. 43. 2 Cor. v. 8. 1 John i. 7. Rev. vii. 14 ; xiv. 13.

VII. Popish Indulgences. The papists say, that the Pope, by his authority, may grant indulgences, and that these remit the punishments with which God visits sin, and their validity does not depend on the disposition of the sinner. When Pope Leo X. wanted money to build a cathedral at Rome, he sent messengers into different countries to sell indulgences. Tetzel was one of them, who told the people that 'the very moment the money chinks against the bottom of the chest, the soul escapes from purgatory and flies to heaven.' This profanity roused Martin Luther, and led to the glorious Reformation. Pope Pius V. encouraged the Irish to rebel against Queen Elizabeth, by promising them seven years' indulgence, and in case they should die in the war, the remission of all their sins. Leo XII., in 1825, offered the most plenary and complete indulgence to all who would pour forth prayers to God for the extirpation of heresies. In 1840, the Pope granted an indulgence of 100 years to every one who shall say, 'O, immaculate queen of heaven, I adore you. It is you who have delivered me from hell. From you I look for all my salvation.' The sum of £3 2s. 4d. is required for murder ; £4 for adultery ; and £4 6s. for incest. Thousands by this iniquitous system have been induced to commit the grossest sins, and to say, Let me do what wickedness I will, by indulgences I can obtain the pardon, and so escape punishment. The Pope, who pretends to sit in the seat of God, and to grant indulgences, is guilty of the most horrid blasphemy.

VIII. Popish Miracles. The papists affirm that they have the power to work miracles. These supposed miracles are generally wrought to advance the reputation of some particular chapel, or town, or image, or religious order, are invented by men of the vilest character, and are false, lying, absurd, and puerile. Of these we are forewarned by an inspired apostle—'that wicked one, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.' 2 Thess. ii. 8 The following are a few of them. The papists affirm : 1. That Patrick had a wonderful staff covered with gold and precious stones, which he received from a man who had it immediately from Christ, and that with it he cast all the venomous beasts out of Ireland. 2. That Piran fed ten kings and their armies in Cornwall with his three cows, and raised to life dead pigs and dead men. 3. That Germanus brought from Rome to England relics of all the apostles, with which he instantly opened the eyes of a blind girl. 4. That Justinian had his head cut off by three wicked men ; that in the place where the head fell, a fountain of pure

water instantly flowed; and that he took his own head between his arms, and went down to the sea-shore. 5. That Osittra, after her head was cut off, rose up, took the head in her hands, walking firmly about a quarter of a mile, and knocked at a church door. 6. That Decumanus, after his head was cut off, took it up, carried it to a spring, and with his own hands washed the blood away!

IX. POPISH WORSHIP OF SAINTS. The papists affirm that the saints are to be honoured and invocated, that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their very relics are to be venerated. They blasphemously call the Virgin Mary 'the mother of God—mother of divine grace—ark of the covenant—gate of heaven—refuge of sinners—comforter of the afflicted—queen of angels, of patriarchs, of apostles, of martyrs, and of all saints—most undefiled—resplendent star.' The papists offer to Mary these impious petitions: 'Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners. O thou unspotted mother of God, be thou a mother to me. Holy virgin, mother of God, defend me from my enemies in my last hour. Remember, O most holy virgin Mary, that no one ever had recourse to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy mediation, without obtaining relief.' Again, they are blindly taught to say, 'O sacred virgin, my dear mother, I choose thee for my guide, I put myself under thy colours.' The papists, by worshipping the Virgin Mary, and numerous other saints, are guilty of the grossest absurdity, profanity, and idolatry. They pray to beings who are entirely ignorant of their wants: they ascribe to creatures the incommunicable attributes of the Almighty; they encroach on the all-atoning and exclusive intercession of our Redeemer; they contradict the example of the apostles, and oppose the most express declarations of the Holy Scriptures. 'There is *one* mediator (not many) between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,' 1 Tim. ii. 5. 'If any man sin, we have *an* advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins,' 1 John ii. 1. Sir Culling E. Smith states that on August 16th, 1843, he saw the Pope at Rome bow down before an image of Peter, that was formerly an image of Jupiter; and that in 1842, the popish authorities received the enormous sum of £10,000 from the King of Naples, for making Maria Francesca a *Saint!*

X. POPISH PERSECUTIONS. The *persecuting* character of popery is notorious. Fifty millions of Christians have suffered death under its iron hand. It has been 'drunken with the blood of the saints.' The votaries of the system speak truly when they say it is 'unchanged.' Very lately Dr. Kalley has been imprisoned at Madeira. The Bible

Christians who attended the preaching at his house were cruelly treated by lawless ruffians, instigated by the priests. One poor man was put in prison for six months because he and some of his neighbours read and talked about the Scriptures together. Another very intelligent man was shamefully beaten, was tried on a charge of reading and explaining the Scriptures, and without any legal evidence in support of this was condemned to an imprisonment of four months, with payment of the costs. A woman was sentenced to imprisonment for six months, for calling images 'ugly things.' Maria Joaquina was set at liberty in July last, after an imprisonment of twenty-two months, for saying something not quite in accordance with the dogmas of the Church of Rome. When the Rev. Jas. Julius Wood left Madeira in June, 1845, there were twenty-two persons, and five of them were women, confined in a filthy prison, and that for their attachment to the Holy Scriptures! The dastardly and iniquitous treatment of the defenceless Queen of Tahiti is pretty well known to the British public. And this also should be known, that in 1844 medals were struck and sold in Rome, at the papal mint, by the papal officer, to do honour to the horrible massacre of St. Bartholomew, and to the persecution of the pious Hussites. 'How long, O Lord, holy and true?'

In the papers of this day it is stated that Commissioners from the Spanish government had just arrived at Fernando Po, with a peremptory command from the Queen of Spain to expel the Baptist missionaries forthwith. The reason assigned for this attack on religious liberty is, that 'the religion of Spain is the Catholic religion, which admits of no toleration.'

We have not been able to ascertain the names of the forty-six Protestants who are said to have joined the ranks of popery in Newcastle within the last few weeks. If there be such, instead of having been 'guided by God's grace into the one fold of the one shepherd,' we think it far more likely that by 'artificial flowers,' 'beautiful banners,' 'splendid and magnificent' vestments, melting music, fragrant incense, and Italian enchantment, they have been decoyed into the arms of the mother of harlots.

> 'O for that warning voice, which he who saw
> The Apocalypse heard cry in heaven aloud.

We remind parents and guardians of youth of their overwhelming responsibility. We urge them to be increasingly assiduous in guarding the rising generation against popish influence. We caution them against employing popish masters or governesses in their families or schools, and allowing popish servants to have access to their children. We would

encourage no bigotry nor unkind feeling against papists : but popery we hold in abhorrence. We believe it to be plainly foretold, strikingly delineated, and tremendously denounced in the word of God. 'Let no man deceive you by any means : for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition : who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.' 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. 'Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils ; speaking lies in hypocrisy ; having their conscience seared with a hot iron ; *forbidding to marry*, and commanding to *abstain* from *meats*, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.' 1 Tim. iv. 1-3. 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, THAT YE BE NOT PARTAKERS OF HER SINS, AND THAT YE RECEIVE NOT OF HER PLAGUES.' Rev. xviii. 2, 4.

SERMON XVII.

JUDAS AND HIS BAG.

'THIS HE SAID, NOT THAT HE CARED FOR THE POOR: BUT BECAUSE HE WAS A THIEF, AND HAD THE BAG, AND BARE WHAT WAS PUT THEREIN.'—*John* xii. 6.

THERE must have been in the person, the language, and the behaviour of our blessed Lord everything calculated to arrest attention, to excite admiration, and to kindle affection. We wonder not that those who knew Him best loved Him most: that those who were favoured to gaze on His placid countenance, listen to His gracious words, and witness His benevolent deeds, should have felt the warmest attachment. Mary was specially privileged: she had sat at His feet, and received instruction and commendation; and her beloved brother Lazarus had recently been restored from the grave. She was thoughtful and contemplative; a woman of deep feeling and confiding affection. She felt an inexpressible sense of obligation to Christ. Her heart overflowed with gratitude. Love is active, unwearied, generous. Nothing is too hard to do, or to endure, for the beloved object. It cannot long lurk unrepressed, but will evince itself by action. The Sabbath before Christ expired on the cross He supped at Bethany. 'Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.' This noble act of gratitude and love could not be estimated by the narrow, worldly soul of Judas. He became sulky and passionate and thus expressed his opinion of the transaction: 'Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.' Let me call your attention to his Bag, his Theft, and his Deceit.

I. HIS BAG. The disciples, who had left all to follow Christ, were often assisted in their journeys; and the money they obtained for their own support and the poor they put in a bag or large purse. The keeping of this bag was entrusted to Judas, one of the twelve. This life is pro-

bationary. Every man is tried according to his propensity. Judas was naturally covetous, and an opportunity was afforded by his appointment to carry the bag, of testing his character.

The possession of the Bag is dangerous. There are but few persons who are proof against the pernicious influence of wealth ; to have money at your disposal, and especially other people's money, is a temptation. If you see it and handle it you are in danger of coveting it. And they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in perdition : for the love of money is the root of all evil ; which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. The love of the Bag increases with the possession, and becomes one of the basest passions, a sore disease, a hideous demon. It debases and depraves the soul ; weakens and destroys all sentiments of kindness, generosity, and justice ; degrades the human being below the beast, and transforms him into an unnatural and frightful monster. For gain he will sacrifice his reputation, his soul, his heaven ; and the health, happiness, and life of his relatives. The rights, peace, and safety of his fellow-men lose all their importance, and nothing but the Bag is prized, sought, or desired. Money is the god he worships, the leader he follows, the heaven after which he pants. He confounds right and wrong, sets aside all laws human and divine, and is prepared for any unrighteous, villainous, or cruel deed.

The possession of the Bag is unsatisfying. He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; neither he that loveth abundance with increase. He has obtained it, but is disappointed. It is not what he expected. His thirst is not quenched, but becomes more insatiable. The desires enlarge more rapidly than the Bag. His notions of poverty and riches undergo a change with his changing circumstances. What once seemed riches soon comes to be accounted poverty. That which from a lower point was the height of his ambition becomes, when he has reached it, only a point from which to look higher. He never says, It is enough. Happiness is not in the Bag. There is nothing there congenial to the intellectual faculties and moral capabilities of his soul. He looks at it, but it cannot look at him. He may speak to it ; but it answers not. He may love it ; but it cannot love him in return. There is no reciprocity. His food is not sweeter, his sleep sounder, nor his clothes easier because he has the Bag. A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth.

The possession of the Bag is uncertain. Riches make to themselves wings and fly away. What strange reverses of fortune have we witnessed. How many have been suddenly hurled from the pinnacle of prosperity to

the depths of adversity. One day they were rolling in ease and affluence, the next, they were grappling with cold poverty. A ship sunk, a mine failed, a bank stopped, and their Bag was gone. Man heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

The possession of the Bag is no security against death. This is a foe that no wealth can bribe. You may say, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But you may hear a voice, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? How dreadful must thy summons be, O Death! to him who is at ease in his possessions. When the tongue is faltering, the eye-strings breaking, the limbs trembling, life itself quivering on the pale lip, what can the Bag do for you? Your relatives may wish the useless old fellow out of the way: and you die unlamented. But after death there is the Judgment. The Bag must be accounted for. Each one must answer for himself. Your character will be developed, and your destiny fixed. Then shall the Judge say, I was hungry and ye gave me no meat: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

II. His Theft. He was a thief and had the Bag, and bare what was put therein. That is, he bore away, he stole, pilfered from the Bag, and laid it aside for himself. Against a highwayman you may defend yourself: but, how difficult to detect him who embezzles. Many a man puts on a fair face while he cheats you: filches from you your good name, and robs you of your right, and yet pretends to act your friend: or perhaps the gentleman. But Judas is a thief, whatever cloak he puts on to hide the fraud, or whatever office he fills. Look at

Judas the monarch. He deprives his subjects of their rights, keeps them in bondage, heavily taxes them, requires bricks without affording the necessary material, issues laws the most despotic and irreligious, and casts into prison, or a burning fiery furnace, or a lion's den, those who conscientiously refuse obedience. He squanders the people's money, and sacrifices tens of thousands of lives under the pretence that the honour, peace, and safety of the nation are in danger; when the great object is the gratification of his own pride, ambition, dissipation, or revenge.

Judas the magistrate. He keeps Paul in prison to please the Jews, or with the hope of obtaining money for his release. He interrupts and insults the prisoner on his defence, saying, Thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. He sits upon the bench to judge him after the law, and yet commands him to be smitten contrary to the law. He establishes drunkeries, and then sends to jail the deluded victims who have swallowed his intoxicating liquors. Instead of com-

posing differences, promoting justice, preventing wrong, suppressing vice, and being a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to such as do well; he perverts his power to the ruin of multitudes, and to the injury of all. The vile are protected, and the virtuous crushed. He acquits the wolf, and passes sentence on the lamb. Or he arrogantly says within himself Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

Judas the lawyer. He will undertake to defend a cause however unrighteous it may be; will do his utmost to make the worst appear the better reason; will contend that black is white, and white is black; boast of the glorious uncertainty of the law, endeavour to obscure it, increase and not redress injuries, take a bribe, protract the suit, devour the person he promised to save, betray a honest poor man, and befriend a rich villain because his fees are sure. Truth and justice fall in the streets, falsehood and iniquity triumph.

Judas the landlord. His object is personal honour and indulgence, by increasing in riches and extending his domains. His inward thought is that his houses shall continue for ever, and his dwelling-places to all generations: he calls his lands after his own name. His motto is, Leases at the highest rate, and shortest period—on three uncertain lives.* He swells his income by half starving his tenants. He increases the game to devour the produce of the farmer, and gives the farmer notice to quit if he kills any of the game. He would be a keeper of the consciences of all in his employ, determine what place of worship they shall attend, control their votes at elections, grind their faces, suck their vitals, destroy their manhood, and reduce them to beggary and slavery. Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. 'Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just and he doth not resist you.'

Judas the surgeon. When he commences practice, he gives orders for his servant to call him out of the church in the middle of the service, that spectators may suppose he has numerous patients: after a while he

* The old custom in Cornwall.—J. H. B.

neglects the sanctuary nearly altogether, alleging that his extensive profession demands all his time. For the same reason he gallops through the streets, and always appears to be in a great hurry. He finds the mansions of the rich far more attractive than the cottages of the poor. He protracts the disease that he may multiply his calls. He charges five shillings for medicine that did not cost sixpence. He neglects the miner who pays monthly; or experiments upon him—kill or cure. He gives certificates of health to sickly, weakly patients; or, Palmer-like, gets assurances of their lives, and then poisons them.

Judas the priest. He entered the office for a morsel of bread, or a good living, and not to turn men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God. He entered not by Christ into the fold, but climbed up some other way, and is a thief and a robber. He is a wolf in sheep's clothing; a greedy eagle that gluts the carcase; that looks far more intently after the Bag—the collections—than after souls. He goes not out into the highways and hedges to bring in the poor, the lame, the halt, and the blind: but, by fair promises, will try to decoy the members of other Churches. He prefers the theatre, the ball-room, the card-table, the tavern, to the temple. He swore to preach his Master, but betrays Him into the hands of the wealthy scribes and elders. He flatters the buyers and sellers, and turns the house of God into a house of merchandise and a den of thieves. He never mentions hell to ears polite; but prophesies smooth things, daubs his hearers with untempered mortar, and cries, Peace, peace, when God hath not spoken peace. The blood of souls is on his hands, and cursing will be heaped upon his head by those who charge him with their murder.

Judas, the mine captain. He was once, perhaps, a poor man himself; but he has forgotten the rock whence he was hewn, and the hole of the pit whence he was digged. He now takes advantage of the ignorance or necessity of the indigent: and misrepresents the state of the ground that he may get the utmost for the take. If the labourer has toiled hard, got a few extra shillings the last month, Judas will see that in the next he shall be lowered to that amount. Also that he shall pay doctor's and school money, though he has no child of his own to send; while his earnings are so reduced that he is scarcely able to provide necessaries for his family. Thus his children are obliged to go to the mine before their young and tender frames are equal to the task,* to risk their lives in climbing long ladders, and to toil amidst foul air, tending to weakness, disease, and death. Hence so many leave, though reluctantly, the scenes of their youth, and their native land, for foreign climes.

* Thank God, that by considerate Acts of Parliament, much of this is mitigated, or no longer possible.—J. H. B.

Judas the shopkeeper. He will fawn and bow to the rich, put a filthy playbill in the window if he thinks it will please them, and stoop to any meanness to get a customer. He has light weights, false balances, short measures, and cunning contrivances in weighing, measuring, and making bargains : shifty tricks with which to cheat the buyer and pick the pockets of his customers. He will pretend to be indifferent about receiving ready money for his goods ; will entice you to go in debt and run up a long bill, that he may charge the highest price, and put in articles you never had, trusting for his escape to the badness of your memory. He cares not how he feeds your pride, strongly recommending the newest fashions, however ridiculous or unbecoming : or how you spend your money for that which satisfieth not, so long as he lines his bag. He forgets the old proverb, Honesty is the best policy. He changes colour more quickly than the chameleon ; rises and falls, like the tide, with the phases of the moon ; and is prepared at any time to sell his conscience, and even his Lord, for thirty pieces of silver.

Judas the publican. To entice men to his drunkery, he establishes a sick club, and contrives that so much money shall be taken out of it for drink. At the annual meeting each member is taxed from one to two shillings for the poisonous liquor. But what does Judas care how many pockets he empties, intellects he weakens, stomachs he disorders, constitutions he destroys, souls he ruins ; how many wives he makes widows, and children orphans ; or how many he obliges to wear the coarsest garments and to nibble the driest crusts, so that his lady may rustle in her silks, his barmaid flaunt in her finery, and he waddle in his fatness. But verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth. He may raise himself a house with the fruits of his injustice, and purchase a field with the price of blood : but the stones from the wall shall cry out against him, and the timber from the roof shall answer their cries. A dreadful curse rests on all his possessions. His magnificent house shall be more cheerless than a dungeon, his riches more burdensome than poverty, his food shall be in his mouth as wormwood, and in his bowels as gravel.

Judas the player. He dresses himself up as a squire or a duke, while he is some idle dissipated vagabond. He says he is a refiner of morals, though a wholesale poisoner. He calls his performances innocent recreations, though they consist of lascivious maxims, wanton gestures, and horrid oaths. He affirms that his partners are all respectable characters, though drunkards, debauchees, and prostitutes. He avows that his supporters are the gentry of the town, though they may be some of the most irreligious. He speaks great swelling words of vanity to allure through the lusts of the flesh and wantonness, while he himself is the servant of corruption. Impurity forms the education of players, taints

their language, disposes their dress, directs their gestures, presides over their music, treads the boards, occupies the boxes, haunts the gallery, and heaps her foul abominations on the reserved seats.

Judas the poor man. He has to toil for the bread that perisheth; and he might do it honourably to himself, and advantageously to his employers. But he is more intent on his own ease than his master's profit. He never goes earnestly about any work, but trifles and loiters away his time; is twice as long on an errand as is necessary; puts on appearance of activity in the presence of his master, while careless and indolent; performs his work in a slovenly manner; is not very scrupulous about speaking the truth; will not hesitate to pilfer when he has an opportunity, or to be a party to bye-laws and underhand practices by which he carries on a regular system of fraud. His character is the more base and despicable in consequence of the confidence placed in him on account of his profession. He obeys with eye-service, as a man-pleaser; but not in singleness of heart, fearing God. Thus Judas is found in every condition of life, and among all classes of society. Let us now look at

III. His Deceit. He said, Why was this waste? 'Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor: but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was therein.'

He attempted to deceive his Lord. But how could he for a moment have entertained the thought, after the evidence he had had, again and again, that all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom he had to do? He had been with Christ for three years, and had not only seen Him heal diseases, raise the dead, calm the tempest, and expel demons; but search the inmost recesses of the human heart. He had not only read: 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I try the reins:' but Judas had received overwhelming evidence that Christ knew what was in man. Months before this he had proof that Christ perfectly knew his character, for he had been reproved for his base designs, and warned of his danger. When Peter said, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' Jesus answered, 'Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon.' How vain then were all his pretences and subterfuges with Him who hath eyes as a flame of fire!

He tried to deceive Mary: the modest, timid, generous follower of her meek and lowly Lord. He did not advise her fashionably to broider her hair instead of employing it to wipe the feet of Christ; nor

say, she had better purchase a splendid dress for herself than spend her money on perfume to pour on the Saviour's head; nor that she would act prudently if she would lay by her money until the decline of life; but that it would be more pleasing to God and profitable to man, an act of greater piety and charity, if she would give the money to the poor: that is, put it into the bag, that he might have a chance of pilfering a good portion of it for himself. Wretched apostate! Base hypocrite! Let her alone, said Jesus, why trouble ye the woman? Why deprive her of an opportunity, such as she will never have again, of showing her gratitude? Cease your insinuations that would render it doubtful to her conscience whether she had done right or wrong! She has done what she could; shown her attachment in a way the most suitable, obtained by fair means what she has poured on Me. It was her own property, and she had a right to dispose of it as she pleased, answerable not to you, but to God. You had no right over it, and no cause to complain, much less to say it has been wasted. I approve of her deed, and gave her an assurance of My acceptance. She hath done a good work; a work of faith, gratitude, and love: from good motives, according to My precepts, after My example, and for My glory; and she has done it not by constraint, but of a willing mind: readily and cheerfully. And verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her. She has done it to embalm My body, and I will embalm her memory; will have her deeds carefully entered on imperishable records. Thus actions which the worldly blame, through the spirit of envy, covetousness, and avarice, Christ takes delight to distinguish, honour, and record.

Judas endeavoured to deceive his brethren. For a long period he had succeeded, and even on this occasion for a time they were imposed on. The disciples had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? And they murmured against Mary. How wonderful that he should have been able for such a period to conceal his real character from his associates. What reserve and caution he must have practised! He abstains from sensuality to feed his parsimony: avoids gross immoralities through fear of detection; maintains a reputation for sanctity while a servant of corruption; puts on religion as a cloak for his covetousness; steals the livery of heaven to serve Satan; and acts his part so well as to escape even the suspicion of his brethren. And so does Judas in the present day. He professes to care for the interest of religion at the time that he is injuring it; hinders a work of piety under pretence of furthering a work of charity; and artfully labours to divert your attention from Christ to the poor. Not that he careth for the poor.

O, says he, hypocritically, why do you preach so strongly against the players; I am sure you only encourage them to remain longer in the town, and induce more persons to see the performances. Not that he careth for the morality of the town: for if he did, he would have made enquiry whether the players were not defrauding the Queen's revenue, and would have circulated suitable tracts to counteract the contagion: but because he is himself immoral, and wanted the way clear, to go in and gratify his own depraved taste. But why do you not preach in the chapel? says Judas; I believe you would do far more good to souls there. Not that he careth for souls; but only wants to escape hearing the faithful preaching of the Gospel, lest it should disturb the apathy of his own soul. But why, says Judas, do you so frequently denounce intemperance? for you only exasperate the publican, and drive the moderation man from your chapel to some other place of worship, where this subject is never introduced. Not that he careth for the soul of the publican or the moderation man; but that he might take his glass more snugly and securely. Yet, says Judas, you must be injuring your health to stand in the open air, exposed to the sun, wind, and rain. Not that he careth for your health a quarter part as much as he is concerned for his own, and to escape that reproach to which his cowardice and indolence justly expose him. But it must be very expensive to publish and circulate so many books, and to what purpose is this waste? Waste, is it, Judas? Yes, in thine eyes; but for no other reason than that it does not go into thy bag. Waste, is it? To dispel ignorance and to diffuse knowledge: to beat back the surges of wickedness and to raise the moral standard; to shake the gates of hell and to swell the hosts of heaven; to defend thy master, the great apostate spirit, and to place gems in the diadem of our blessed Redeemer? Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. Waste, is it? And dost *thou* waste nothing—in thy splendid mansion, superb furniture, costly hothouse, gay clothing, sumptuous meats, intoxicating drinks, filthy cigars, silly cards, and polluting plays? Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye.

But Judas deceived himself. He persisted in his sinful course, and rushed on to destruction, in spite of frequent and faithful warnings. Four days after this, Christ said in his hearing, 'Ye are clean, but not all; for He knew who should betray Him.' And again, 'One of you which eateth with Me shall betray Me.' And again, 'He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, the same shall betray Me. . . . Woe unto

that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed Him, said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.' Yet no confession is made: no alteration takes place. He goes from the supper, enters into a contract with the Jewish rulers, and sells his Lord for thirty pieces of silver. He knew the garden where Jesus had been accustomed to retire for devotion; and consents to conduct an armed band of ruffians to apprehend Him. He gives them the signal for seizing His person, by perfidiously saluting Him. He received the cutting reproof from Christ: 'Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?' To the very last he practises his villany under the mask of friendship. The atrocious deed is done. His Master is bound and led away by the soldiers. The sleeper awakes. Conscience strikes its terrible fangs into his bosom. He is filled with indescribable horror. What would he now give to revoke his bargain? What do his wages of unrighteousness profit him? They eat his flesh as it were fire. He cannot retain the thirty pieces of silver, but returns and casts them at the feet of the rulers, in the temple, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood: and he went out and hanged himself.

If there is a Judas present we beseech you not to follow his example: but immediately fall down at the feet of Jesus: confess your treachery, loathe your depravity, struggle to be released from your bondage, cast your guilty, polluted, hell-deserving soul on the 'innocent blood;' and He who came into the world to save sinners will pardon your iniquities, renew your nature, deliver you from the perdition of ungodly men, and receive you to His own heaven.

Let the subject lead you to close *self-examination*. Each should say with Judas, *Master, is it I?* Say it not carelessly, insolently, and hypocritically, as he did; but seriously, sincerely, humbly, and earnestly: with an intense desire to know your real character. Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. If you have had the bag, and appropriated what was therein to yourself, instead of laying it out as your Lord directed, do not deny the sin, nor attempt to palliate your conduct. Think not to excuse yourself by alleging that others have done the same: nor that such was the foreknowledge of God, and the circumstances in which you were placed, that you were under the necessity of sinning: nor, though detection would not be a very pleasant affair, that a merciful Saviour will not punish you eternally for looking after number one in this world. So Judas might have thought; but Jesus said, It had been better for that man if he had not been born: and this would not be true if he is ever

delivered from his place of punishment. There will be no termination to the torments of the damned.

Let it fill you with *sorrow*. Not with the sorrow of the world which worketh death, as it did in Judas. But with a godly sorrow, a sorrow felt on God's account, that harmonises with His will, and that is produced by His Spirit. 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight.' That you have acted ungratefully, treacherously, and rebelliously; that you have sinned against the light of your understanding and remonstrances of conscience, to the injury of others, and amidst unnumbered instances of divine goodness, should fill you with the deepest compunction, and cover you with shame.

Come instantly to Christ. He would have pardoned Judas had he made application. That same week He shed burning tears over profane, profligate Jerusalem, saying, 'How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not.' Again, when hanging on the Cross, He prayed for His murderers, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' And He was delivered for your offences, raised again for your justification, and ever liveth to make intercession for you. Come to Him. Come as you are.

'Come in, this moment, at His call,
And live for Him who died for all.'

SERMON XVIII.

GLORIOUS PROSPECTS.

'And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.'—*Rom.* viii. 23.

A more interesting, edifying, and consoling chapter than this was never penned. Its style is elegant, energetic, sublime. Its argumentation is clear, consecutive, triumphant. The doctrines it unfolds are transcendently glorious. The privileges it exhibits are inestimably valuable. The apostle makes a transition, in the seventeenth verse, from the *privileges* to the *sufferings* of the Christian believer. If *you* sustain this character, he encourages you by a variety of powerful considerations, firmly, patiently, and cheerfully to bear up under the afflictions of this probationary and disciplinary state. He reminds you that the Captain of your salvation was a sufferer; that the more you suffer for righteousness' sake, the more fully you are conformed to Him, and the loftier will be the station you shall occupy around His throne. That, however numerous, heavy, keen, complicated, protracted your present sufferings, they are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in you. That your afflictions do not spring from the dust, are not the offspring of chance, the progeny of blind uncertainty; but of God's predestination; in weight and measure they are dealt out by the kind and considerate hand of your heavenly Father. That while you are suffering on earth, there is One, who, amidst the irradiations of heaven's throne, the melody and harmony of cherubic and seraphic voices, beholds you in your lowest abode, hears your faintest sighs, sympathises with you, and is ever ready to send you relief. That you are not left to endure in your own strength; the Spirit helpeth your infirmities. That your trials are not intended to injure, but to work together for your good. Not to drive you from God, but to unite you more closely to Him. There is another argument which Paul adduces why Christians should endure afflictions: other people have their trials as well as you. One universal sigh comes forth from the species. The

whole creation groaneth. Men of every clime, colour, and condition are suffering, and are heaving, gasping, longing for bliss which this world does not afford. Now if the ungodly have trials, without the grace of God to support them; if they are desiring what they will never enjoy, because they do not seek it in the way appointed; if the sufferings of this life are to them but the beginning of sorrows: while *you* at death shall exchange sorrow for everlasting joy, you ought *not* to complain, but nobly to stand erect beneath life's pressure. The text strikingly brings before us the Christian's present and the Christian's future condition.

I. The Christian's Present Condition. It is a mixed state:

1. *It is one of joy.* The phrase, 'we have the first-fruits of the Spirit,' is strikingly descriptive of character and privilege. In the preceding verses, Christians are said to walk after the Spirit; to mind the things of the Spirit; to have the Spirit dwelling in them; and through the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body; to be led by the Spirit; and to have the Spirit bearing witness with their spirit, that they are the children of God. *Christians have the Spirit.* Religion is not hereditary. You cannot produce it by any cogitations of your minds, volitions of your wills, decisions of your judgments, flights of your imaginations, exercises of your affections, attendance on the ordinances, nor by any bodily exercise. If you possess it, the Holy Spirit communicated it to your soul, and it can no longer be kept alive there than as He feeds the flame with celestial oil. Religion in its commencement, continuance, and completion is the work of the Spirit.

The Spirit convinced you of sin. He discovered to you your transgressions, and the danger to which you were exposed. He produced a godly sorrow, and a loathing of depravity. He led you to make humble confession, to deprecate the dreaded penalty, and to desire salvation. He unsealed your eyes to behold the bleeding Lamb, nerved your spirits to grasp the Cross, opened your hearts to catch the healing stream, deposed to the fact of your adoption into the divine family, and sealed you unto the day of redemption.

The Spirit regenerated you. He raised you from the death of sin to a new life in righteousness. He took away the hard, cold, barren, and unrelenting heart, and put into you a heart that vibrates to the touch divine, that glows at the sight of Calvary, and beats with holy ardour for the mind that was in Christ. He caused your affections to flow in a new channel, to move in harmony, and to tend to a right object.

The Spirit carries on the work of Sanctification. He hallows your thoughts, subdues your wills, enlightens your consciences, purifies your

affections, eradicates evil principles, washes away moral defilement, and makes you partakers of the Divine nature. To the action of His all-pervading and all-purifying influences your corruptions shall be exposed, burn together, and none shall quench them.

The Spirit imparts the richest consolation. He is your Comforter. He gives joy, when all around give sorrow. He produces a settled serenity in the depth of the soul, that remains undisturbed when the surface is rippled by the battling of the elements. There are no pleasures so pure, exalted, and perennial, as those which He imparts. A peace that passeth understanding, hope that blooms with immortality, joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The apostle terms the holy principles now implanted in your hearts, the graces with which you are adorned, and the pleasures of which you are the subjects, the *first-fruits* of the Spirit. The allusion is to the practice of the ancient Hebrews, who brought the first-fruits of their harvest unto God as an expression of their submission, dependence, and gratitude. A sheaf of barley was threshed in the court of the temple, three pints of it were washed and bruised; on this oil and incense were thrown; the priest waved it before the Lord towards the four corners of the earth, threw a handful of it on the altar, and preserved the rest. This was an evidence that the corn was ripe, and a pledge of the full harvest.

And what you enjoy of the Spirit now is the pledge, earnest, foretaste of those rich enjoyments and lovelier adornments that await you in heaven. Christians *have* eternal life abiding in them. The commencement of the life everlasting. The beginning of an abundant harvest. An incorruptible seed that, in a better soil, under a brighter sun, watered by the river of life, shall bring forth fruit unto perfection: principles that shall have their full development in a purer region: graces that shall rise to maturity in the true tabernacle. The sight through a glass darkly shall give place to perfect vision. The dim outline of God's image on the soul shall be filled up in all its beauty and completeness. This twilight shall be followed by sacred, high, eternal noon.

If what the Spirit now imparts be only the *first-fruits* what will the *harvest* be? What honours await us; to what height of glory shall we be raised; how will our faculties be strengthened, and our capacities enlarged; what rivers of bliss will flow into our raptured souls, as we hear the voice, catch the smile, gaze on the excellency of, and hold unbroken fellowship with, the Three-One Jehovah! Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Let us not forget that these graces, though *but* the first-fruits, *are* the

first-fruits ; the same in *kind* as we shall enjoy in heaven. There may be latent powers in the soul that cannot be fully developed in the present life, but which will give birth to other and richer pleasures in the kingdom above. The idea we now form of the bliss in heaven is, that it will consist in the new and endless accessions the graces will receive that now adorn the Christian character. There will be nothing sweeter or more excellent in heaven than the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. We now love God ; but then we shall love Him with seraphic fervour. We now serve Him, though often the flesh is weak ; but then we shall serve Him with a sleepless activity. We now praise Him with a stammering tongue ; but then in the loftiest anthems. We have now drops of bliss ; but in His presence there is fulness of joy, at His right hand pleasures for evermore. The Christian's present condition is

2. *One of sorrow.* You are on trial for eternity, and you are heavily burdened. You groan within yourself. Your groans sometimes arise

From afflictions of the body. Though it is a temple of the Holy Ghost, and its members instruments of righteousness unto God, it is encompassed with infirmities. Its frailties are numerous, movements sluggish, weariness frequent, diseases complicated, pains acute, decay rapid, and its dissolution certain.

From poverty. Your soul may be filled with the Spirit, and your pocket be empty. Your bread shall be given you, and your water be sure : yet your share in life may be gall and bitterness of soul. The sun of prosperity shines brightly for a time, and then the darkness of adversity intercepts the sky. A fire consumes your house. A storm sinks your ship. An inundation destroys your crop. Trade stagnates. Markets are glutted. Bankruptcies multiply. Demands are made which you are not able to meet. The vessel is tossed on the billows. The needle quivers. You groan.

From persecution. Paul here speaks of this : 'Tribulation, distress, persecution, nakedness, famine, peril, sword. As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long : we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' Under our unrivalled constitution we are sheltered from such brutal attacks ; but slanderous tongues and calumnious pens will cut as deep into a person's character as rough stones or steel swords cut into the muscles of the body.

From the sin and danger of the ungodly. You cannot see the Sabbath profaned, the sanctuary neglected, nor hear the name of God blasphemed, without groaning. 'I beheld the transgressors and was grieved. Rivers of water run down my eyes because they keep not Thy laws.' And when those who are bone of your bone, and flesh of

your flesh, who dwell with you under the same roof, and sit at the same table, serve a different master, and walk in an opposite road, the burden is still heavier. Many a pious husband groans that he has a prayerless wife. Many a godly wife groans that her husband will not walk with her to the table of the Lord. Many excellent children groan that they have parents about to step into the grave, who are unpurged and unforgiven. And many praying parents are groaning over unkind and disobedient children.

From the bereavement of relations and friends. Death enters the dwelling, separates the fibres of your nature, plucks up the roots, cuts asunder whom love had knit and sympathy made one. The lovely child is nipt as the flower by the untimely blast. The desire of the eyes is taken away by a stroke. The house-band is broken, and the family dispersed. Nature unreproved drops a tear. David exclaims, 'My son, my son.' Abraham weeps for his Sarah. Mary and Martha mourn that Lazarus is dead.

From the temptations of Satan. The enemy is permitted to assault you, as you are on trial. He sometimes appears as an angel of light, sometimes as a cunning serpent, and sometimes as a roaring lion. Though beyond his chain he cannot go, you are in heaviness through manifold temptations.

From a discovery of your own imperfections. When ungodly neighbours think they see some blemishes in the Christian, he sees far more in himself. Could they but follow him to his closet, they would hear groaning—O my many ignorances, negligences, defects: the weakness of my faith, the instability of my hope, the coldness of my love, the dimness of my views of God, Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him. Oh that I had wings like a dove! then would I fly away, and be at rest.

II. The Christian's Future Condition. Two great events are mentioned by the apostle.

1. *The complete redemption of the body.* The body will be raised from the grave, not by a vegetative process, nor by a mere act of sovereignty, or of omnipotence; but by a *mediatorial* power. The body was included in Christ's purchase. Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. Christ by dying abolished death. He acquired a right to the body. It is now His property. The price of its redemption has been paid. The Christian waits for its full, perfect, and final deliverance.

Redemption from the power of death and the grave. The body is dead because of sin; adjudged to death because of the original offence,

as a continued exhibition of its horrid turpitude and legal desert. The high privilege which the Christian now enjoys does not exempt him from death. Christ could translate him as easily as He translated Enoch and Elijah, or as He raised Himself from Mount Olivet to Mount Zion above. But it is His will that the Christian should *first* suffer, *then* reign with Him; first die, then live with Him; first go down into the darkness of the sepulchre, then rise with Him into the splendour of an eternal day. He who goes to heaven through death and the grave will be more like Christ, other things being equal, than he who is translated. It is thus a privilege to know the fellowship of His sufferings, and to be made conformable unto His death. To the Christian death has lost its horrors and hostile character. The only weapon with which it could strike, Christ has wrenched away. Its piercing, poisonous sting, Christ has extracted. Death now comes from its Lord with a friendly commission; not to bind, but to release; not to give the signal of perdition, but the passport to glory. The Christian may be wrapped up in a shroud, screwed up in a coffin, laid in the dark, damp, solitary grave; but he shall not be *conscious* of the dampness, darkness, solitude; nor shall he *feel* the bite of the slimy reptile. He is safe. His dust is precious. He rests in hope. Hear the promise of his divine Redeemer: 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.'

Redemption from accidents, diseases, and pains. From all hostile attacks and destructive influences. From the drowning dropsy and the burning fever, the racking rheumatism and the lingering consumption, the power of gravitation, the pressure of the atmosphere, and the disorganisation of the whole material system. It shall know no more weariness, fatigue, exhaustion, pain, sickness, decay, or dissolution; but shall be a fit companion for a glorified spirit, yielding exquisite sensations of delight.

Redemption from its present grossness. It shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption; from the power of sinful appetites and passions, and divested of all gross properties. It will need no food nor medicine. Its organs will serve to receive impressions of vast, varied, tender, and rapturous feelings. It may have the power of moving with the celerity of a sunbeam. When the redemption of the eye is complete, it may see the minutest object at an inconceivable distance. When the redemption of the ear is perfect, it may catch the faintest sound from another world. Two sister spirits may hold converse from two opposite points in the immensity of space. All the senses shall be adapted to the objects of that spiritual world. When the Redeemer shall have put

the finishing stroke on the body, angels shall gaze on its beauty with rapture; covered with excessive brightness, clothed with robes of light, and effulgent with splendours that can never fade. The Christian waits

2. *For the public adoption.* Among the Romans, a person who had been privately adopted was afterwards brought into the Forum and was there publicly adopted; he received the name of the adopting father, became a member of his family, and entitled to a share of his property. The Christian *has been* adopted into the family of God, and received the Spirit of adoption, whereby he cries Abba, Father. But the transaction has been *private.* There has been no audible voice, no outward representation. It has been between God and the soul—real and satisfactory. He is thus an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ. He has a title to, and a foretaste of his heavenly inheritance. But his life is hid with Christ in God. His sonship is concealed. The world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. But there shall be a *public* adoption. It is called in the context the manifestation of the sons of God; and a deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. This will take place at the last day. Christ shall come clothed with celestial radiance. From His face the earth and the heaven shall pass away. At His voice the tombs shall burst, and the unnumbered dead start into life. Then will be the *manifestation* of the sons of God.

Who are the sons of God will be manifested. These now are not easily found. They generally move in the lower ranks of life. They have no desire to attract notice. They are humble, modest, unobtrusive. Fame does not record their names. Travellers do not go in search of them. But the Lord knoweth them that are His. A book of remembrance is written before Him, and they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels.

Their *number* will be manifested. Christ's flock is now a little flock; but we are apt to think it less than it is. Elijah thought he was left alone when there were seven thousand men in the land who had not bowed the knee to Baal. James and John said, 'Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.' Religious prejudices are strong. Sects are bitter against each other. Some fierce bigots will make you an offender for a word, unchristianise you for a sentiment, or perhaps expel you if you dare to think and speak the sentiments of your own hearts. But the sons of God shall be found to be an innumerable company—a great multitude—out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and their voices shall be as the sound of many waters.

Their *character* will be manifested. Most of their deeds of benevolence are now performed privately. When they would hold communion with their Father they enter into their closet and shut the door. The fine principle of faith that connects their souls with Christ cannot be seen: nor the pure flame of love that burns in their hearts towards God. Their motives are suspected, their principles misnamed, their practices misrepresented. But then it will be shown that the love of Christ constrained them; that their faith was not folly; nor their hope, presumption; nor their meekness, meanness; nor their zeal, rashness; nor their uprightness, eccentricity. God will wipe away the rebuke from off His children, and bring forth their righteousness as the light. For what they did in secret they shall be rewarded openly. The King shall say unto them, Come, ye blessed children of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Their *glory* shall be manifested. They are seen to be the persons whom God delighteth to honour. They are arrayed in white robes. They sit on resplendent thrones. They wear unfading crowns. They enjoy pure and permanent bliss. Every evil is removed. Every want is supplied. Every desire is gratified. Every faculty finds sweet and high employ. The Lord is their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning are ended. For all this honour and glory the Christian is now 'waiting.' It is an object of his *faith* and *desire*. He is daily *preparing* for it and patiently *tarrying*. He murmurs not that he has now to suffer, but all the days of his appointed time waits until his change shall come.

And now let me enquire, Have *you* the first-fruits of the Spirit? Has He excited in you sorrow for sin, a hatred of sin, a desire to be delivered from sin? Has He regenerated your hearts? Has He sanctified your souls? Is He your Comforter? Or do you quench His influences, and harden your hearts against His operations? Are you sensual, having not the Spirit? Then what will *you* do at the day of the manifestation of the sons of God? You will awake to shame and everlasting contempt. You will come forth from your graves to the resurrection of damnation. You will be transferred from the slimy reptile to the worm that never dieth: from the sound of the tabret and the harp to weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. *There is a hell;* but *you* need not enter it. See your danger while there is a possibility of escaping. Now deprecate the terrible punishment. Humbly, earnestly, cry out, 'From the bitter pains of the second death, good Lord, deliver us.' He will, if you fly to that Saviour who is a hiding place from the storm, and a covert from the tempest. In His side there is a fountain open for sin and uncleanness. Turn your weeping eyes to the Lamb of God.

Listen to His dying exclamation, 'It is finished.' Apprehend and appropriate, personally to yourself, the merits of His death, and you shall find redemption in His blood, the forgiveness of your sins. Through that blood you shall overcome all your enemies. In that blood you shall find a theme for praise through a blissful eternity.

SERMON XIX.

THE SONG OF THE SPIRIT'S LOVE.

'THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT.'—*Romans* xv. 30.

IF you carefully search the Scriptures you cannot fail to perceive that there are three persons equally divine, glorious, and adorable in the Godhead. You must also have noticed that the same act is sometimes attributed to the Father, sometimes to the Son, and sometimes to the Holy Ghost. This arises out of the glorious and incomprehensible union of the Triune Subsistencies in the Divine Essence. They are one, ineffably one, in nature, will, and operation. Hence what is frequently said of one may be justly predicated of the others. Still we must not forget the adorable distinction of Divine Persons, and that their love, though one, has been variously displayed, according to the order of their subsistence, in the economy of redemption, which they have voluntarily established. The Father devised the plan, the Son performed the work, and the Spirit applies the benefits of redemption.

We have frequently spoken of the love of the Father and of the Son. We would now direct your attention to the love of the Spirit, that you may be led cheerfully and diligently to perform those sacred acts of adoration, gratitude, and obedience which you owe to Him in common with the Father and the Son.

I may observe that some suppose that the apostle means by the love of the Spirit, the love which the Spirit sheds abroad in our hearts—the love one to another, which is the fruit of His operations; and if so we should still be justified in speaking of that love which produces all the genuine love in believers. But we understand the apostle as speaking of the love which the Spirit bears to us. 'By all that Christ has done and by the love which the Spirit has manifested.'

I. THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT. Its properties, manifestations, influence. 'God is love,' and before any creature was called into being that love exerted itself in those immanent acts of mutual complacency and delight between the Father, the Son, and the

Spirit. Of this our discoveries are but faint. It is veiled in light inaccessible and full of glory.

But we are to speak of the love of the Spirit to *us*, and before we dwell on its manifestations it may perhaps be well to dwell on a few of its properties.

It is most strictly Divine. Love rises with the other properties of the being that exercises it. Among animals the instinctive affection is slight, and it expires when its purposes are answered. In man love rises with his intellectual powers, and if rightly directed will flow on for ever. In angels benevolence is still more pure and expansive and unwearied. But the love of which the text speaks is the love of 'God the Holy Ghost.' Of His supreme Divinity we have an untrembling conviction. No mathematical demonstration can be more assured, no intuitive law more constant.

Is God omniscient? 'The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.'

Is God omnipresent? 'Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?'

Is God omnipotent? 'All these things worketh that one and the self-same Spirit.'

Is God eternal? 'He is the Eternal Spirit.'

Is creation a divine claim? 'The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.'

Is inspiration a divine procedure? 'Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.'

Is the *resurrection* of the dead a divine act? *Regeneration* a divine work? 'The Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies.'

Such is the unqualified manner in which the inspired writers attribute to Him what is properly divine and inalienable. All the divine perfections then must direct and enforce this love. And it, be it remembered, is a *real affection*, something analogous to love in us.

We must therefore regard this love as eternal. There was never a moment, nor an event, which it did not anticipate. Long ere this world arose the purpose of its redemption was purposed; Jesus was the appointed Mediator, the Legate of the Father, the Anointed of the Spirit. 'The Lord God and His Spirit' covenanted 'to send Him.'

Absolutely spontaneous. The love of the most exalted creature is finite, and hence cannot be independent and self-controlled. The burning seraph is made for a peculiar sphere, he is amenable to a peculiar law, and is dependent on a peculiar arrangement of things. He can do nothing that is peremptory, and self-devoting; he cannot at

pleasure select his own station and assign his own work. The more elevated the more he leans on infinite power, and the more is he bound to infinite authority. But 'the love of the Spirit' soars above these conditions. Sometimes indeed, He is represented as the gift of God the Father in the economy of redemption; but then it is by voluntary condescension and official subordination. He was His own, of irresponsible authority and of self-determining action. He is said not only to be 'sent,' but to 'come' to remind us of His absolute independence, of His willingness to engage in the work.

His love is regulated by Infinite Intelligence. He saw the end from the beginning—perfectly knew the character of those on whom He has set His love—it fully explored the way which it traversed—it grasped each difficulty that would be presented to oppose its designs. Nothing takes Him by surprise. All things are naked and open before His omniscient eye, and He rightly estimated all He would have to meet with, and yet with it in prospect 'He loved us.'

'O wondrous love!
Love nowhere to be found less than Divine.'

The loftiest intellect cannot reach it; our capacities, however they may widen, cannot contain it. It still recedes as we pursue it; it still grows as we approach it; it still amasses and swells its riches and its glories as we calculate it. It is longer than the earth; it is deeper than the ocean; it is broader than the firmament.

But let us notice the various ways in which the Spirit has displayed His love.

In the works of Creation. This earth is the result of His operations. He projected the scale and drew its map. He fixed the axis on which it should turn, and the orbit within which it should travel. 'The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.' What rude and confused elements, what strange opposing causes and contending powers! And who settled the whirlwind? Who subdued the anarchy? 'The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters,' and under His benign influence order rises out of confusion, light out of darkness, beauty out of deformity, the huge and shapeless substances swell into the most lovely objects, and are spread out into the most charming landscapes. Yes, it was He who raised this beautiful world for the residence of man, who sweetly compacted its parts, caused its waters to fall in their appointed channels, mantled its surface with vegetation, and filled it with living creatures, and 'God saw that all was very good.' See also the love of the Spirit in the

Preservation of all creatures. He still disposes and upholds what

He first formed. 'All wait upon Him,' and He gives them their meat in due season. And though because of sin they die and return to dust, He yet remembers our world in mercy. By His beneficent operations vegetation is continued, and the regular succession of living beings preserved. 'Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created; Thou renewest the face of the earth.'

In revealing the great subjects of the Bible. All Scripture has been given by His inspiration. He for four thousand years selected and qualified agents to make known the glorious truths. Revelation came not by the will of man, but 'holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' We cannot here conceive of the 'love of the Spirit,' because we cannot estimate the value of the gift bestowed.

Had He not favoured us with a revelation, what a dreary wilderness would this world have been! How impervious the gloom which would have hung over the destinies of men! How awfully mysterious the designs of God! How miserable every human being, without a ray of light to illuminate his bewildered path, or a gleam of hope to calm his agitated soul! Man would have felt his disease, but could never have discovered a remedy, and so sin would have held universal sway, and misery an uncontrolled dominion.

But the veil is rent, the covering is destroyed, light is come, everything necessary to our present and eternal happiness is here revealed. But while we are walking in the light, and enjoying the benefits of this Volume, let us not forget its Divine Author, that for all its important predictions, its sublime doctrines, its pure precepts, its powerful exhortations, its precious promises, its interesting, full, and glorious discoveries, we are indebted to the 'love of the Spirit.'

And this will appear more manifest, when it is remembered that His design in all His communications has been to direct the attention of the world to the world's Redeemer. All the prophets whom He inspired gave witness to Christ. The beautiful and instructive *system of types* was constructed by Him. He thereby gave the pious of that dispensation the outline that has been filled up by the Gospel. He even inspired Bezaleel to prepare the Tabernacle according to the pattern showed to Moses in the Mount. And St. Paul, speaking of the veil which hung before the Mercy Seat, says, 'The Holy Ghost this signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as yet the first Tabernacle was standing.' Oh, 'the love of the Spirit!'

See it also in His operations to our

Blessed Redeemer. A body was prepared for Him by the Holy Ghost; and likewise a human spirit, to have immediate connection with

Deity, and together constitute the one person Christ Jesus. At His baptism the Holy Ghost descended to qualify His human nature for all those offices for which it was assumed.

'The Spirit of the Lord rested upon Him,' the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And it was through the 'Eternal Spirit that He "offered" Himself without spot to God, and *rose* again.'

In His appointing a standing ministry. It is the Holy Ghost who makes overseers.

In all His operations on individuals. His *visits* to the human heart. And here be it observe l, His love was undeserved, undesired, unsolicited. We were a seed of evil-doers, creatures that were rebellious and totally corrupt. And He perfectly knew the awful demerit of sin, and He fully estimated the awful evil, the prodigious turpitude, the exceeding sinfulness of transgression against a Being of infinite holiness, justice, and goodness. And He *loathed* sin, according to its *full deserts*. His nature was in eternal essential opposition to sin. It must have appeared inconceivably hateful to all His views and sensibilities. What, then, must have been His repugnance to come into contact with beings who openly avowed their preference of an accursed spirit, who enthralled and defiled them; only equalled by that love which, notwithstanding, brought Him down to earth. Oh, the tenderness, the compassion, the benevolence, that leads Him to seek our recovery from darkness, pollution, and misery! To knock at the door of the *sinner's heart*, and ask for an admission; by His secret influences restraining, even where, through man's obstinate resistance, He does not save. Following him and admonishing him as he wanders on the dark mountains, and inviting him to return. Endeavouring in the various trials of life to lead his thoughts to the future world. Sending light into his dark mind, exciting feeling in his stony heart, convincing men of sin, in order to bring them to repentance. And then, when conscience has struck its scorpion-sting into the breast, when the sinner's heart meditates terror, when judgment glares down upon his head, and hell flares up from beneath at his feet, with what readiness does the Spirit take of the things of Christ and show them to the penitent, pointing him to the Lamb of God, who taketh away his sin, helping him to look and be saved. And as soon as he has laid hold of Christ, and God has pardoned him, how does the loving Spirit hasten to visit the sorrowful heart, crying as he enters 'Abba, Father,' witnessing that God is reconciled and imparting peace and joy.

And then His love to *Believers* cannot be described. He makes them His temple. He dwells, making all things new, imparting

heavenly graces, strengthening them for all duties, leading them into all truth, comforting them under all trials : the pledge of our resurrection. Then 'if the Spirit of *Him* that *raised* up Jesus dwell in you, He that raised up Christ shall quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit which dwelleth in you,' and so prepare us fully for glory.

II. The Influence it should have on you. *It should be the theme of your Contemplation.* Years are spent in the investigation of subjects that have little interest, and no connection, with a man's happiness and safety here or hereafter. But not so the 'love of the Spirit,' without it you must have been miserable here and for ever.

Think again of *His Person.* From eternity He dwelt with the Father and the Son in all the splendour of unapproachable magnificence— Of the various ways in which He has manifested His love, and how undeserved.

It should excite your most ardent affections. It is not enough that you meditate upon it while you muse ; let the fire burn, let your vision swell, let your transport be awakened, let it be received into the most honoured recesses of your soul, and laid up among its most treasured delights. Let your heart overflow with gratitude for all His goodness toward you. Love Him, because He has first loved you. Cheerfully surrender your spirit to His sway. Cordially welcome Him to every apartment of your being. Set a *high value* upon His presence in your soul. No language can adequately express the excellence and dignity of such a gift ; and remember, He bestows His riches and favours where He knows they are most ardently desired, and will be most highly prized.

Show your love to the Spirit by loving that *Word*, which He has inspired, and to those *Ordinances* He has appointed, and improve those gifts of the Spirit, influences of light and power, which no attendance on the outward means can command.

Diligently cultivate all the graces which He has implanted in your heart. 'Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice ;' and 'grieve not the Holy Spirit.' Vindictive passions surround the soul with a sort of turbulent atmosphere, than which nothing can be conceived more opposite to the calm and holy light in which the blessed Spirit loves to dwell.

Love all who are loved by the Spirit. If you love Him that begat, you will love them who are begotten of Him. 'Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 'If, then,

there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.' And with that charity which He has caused to glow in your breast, grasp the whole family of man.

Let me encourage you to live in the spirit of prayer. The text—the love of the Spirit. Here is encouragement to pray *for yourselves.* He is disposed to grant *for others.* 'Through Christ we have access by one Spirit to the Father.' 'And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.'

Pray, then, that He may *pour* out His Spirit until the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the desert a garden of the Lord. If there are any of you 'sensual, having not the Spirit,' we remind you that 'if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.' If you walk not after the Spirit, but after the flesh, you die. You commit the greatest sin if you pour contempt on the love of the Spirit.

Repent and come to Christ. 'And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely.'

SERMON XX.

REALITIES OF ETERNITY.

'And so shall we ever be with the Lord.'—1 *Thes.* iv. 17.

Life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel. Its discoveries of a future state are clear, full, instructive, and animating. It draws aside the veil that shrouded the other world from our view. It makes the things of eternity stand out in all their burning realities. It raises, in the distant landscape, objects most attractive, in luminous distinctness. It brings the prize of immortality within our very grasp. It causes scenes of awe, grandeur, and delight to burst on our vision. It throws the world back into the distance. It reduces it to its real insignificant character. It loosens our hold of earth. It dispossesses our heart of its love. It rests the whole structure of our piety on a broad and immovable basis. It kindles within us desires for a loftier, brighter, serener, and purer region. It supports us amidst the pressures of life. It arms us with confidence in the immediate approach of death. It comforts us when bereaved of beloved friends and relatives.

Philosophy never made such discoveries as these. From the vast and varied powers of the soul; its capability of improvement in knowledge and goodness; its inextinguishable thirst for happiness; its high aspirations; the presages of conscience; the irregularities in the Divine administration; philosophy conjectured that the soul might possibly exist in another state. Of the *resurrection of the body* it had no conception—that the body once decayed, dissolved, disorganised, corrupted, reduced to dust, and that dust blown by the winds, washed by the floods, consumed by the fires, or transmuted into other bodies, should be watched by an omniscient eye, and by an omnipotent hand; be collected, reunited, reconstructed, refashioned, formed into a body more bright and beautiful, vigorous and active, incorruptible and immortal; were truths too wonderful and high for philosophy to attain. After it had strained its eye by frequent attempts to penetrate futurity, it could not satisfy its votaries whether death would terminate or perpetuate their existence. It left them without hope 'concerning them which sleep.' From the sages of Greece the members of the Church at Thessalonica

could derive no comfort while keenly feeling the bereavement of their relatives and acquaintances. As these Christians had but recently been converted from heathenism, they perhaps feared the souls of the departed were extinct, that their bodies would always remain in the dust, that they would never again converse together, and that they who had died would be deprived of a sight of Christ at His second coming. We do not wonder that their grief was immoderate and their hearts disconsolate. Perhaps, as was then common, they uttered dismal shrieks, rent their garments, smote their breasts, plucked off their hair, and cast dust on their heads. All this arose from their imperfect views of the Gospel. Timothy, who had just seen them on his way to Athens, probably gave Paul the information. He at once writes this epistle, and pours into their sorrowful bosoms the bright and elevated views of the gospel. We all need the same consolation. We all feel the touching sentiments of the amiable poet of our town —

> 'Friend after friend departs;
> Who hath not lost a friend?
> There is no union here of hearts
> That finds not here an end.
> Were this frail world our final rest,
> Living or dying none were blest.'

We have been recently deprived of a beloved ministerial brother, a Christian church of an able pastor, and Sheffield of one of its most worthy inhabitants. We sorrow not as others who have no hope. The text is full of comfort. The apostle teaches respecting the pious dead :

I. THAT THEIR SOULS EXIST IN A SEPARATE STATE. He assures us, that God will bring the souls of those who have died in the Lord, with Christ, when He shall come to summon all nations and to gather His elect from the four winds. It is deeply affecting to witness the dreadful changes that death makes in the body,—the extremities become inflexible, the skin clay-cold, the eyes inexpressive, the lips discoloured, the tongue silent, the limbs powerless, and the delicate lines of the countenance disappear. But death was not the extinction of their being, nor the termination of their existence. As the stars, though they disappear by day, are not extinguished, but hold their way of glory through the sky ; happy spirits, when absent from the body, soar to a more glorious and blissful region. The stamp of immortality is indelibly fixed on them. Eternal consciousness is their inalienable right. A substance that is immaterial, that has none of the properties of matter, that can examine these properties, that has properties altogether different, that is indivisible, that is a living, active, conscious, intelligent

and willing agent, cannot be dissolved nor destroyed by death. Not only are the soul's intellectual powers unlimited, but its moral capabilities are unbounded. Though fallen, it retains marks of its former greatness and grandeur. It is splendid in ruins. It retains its faculties. It may be repaired and shine in all its pristine beauty, glory, and purity. It may be cleansed of its pollution and swept of its idols. Its lamps may be rekindled. It may become a temple for Jehovah, filled with heavenly light, replenished with heavenly gifts and graces, watered with heavenly influences, and fragrant with all the beauties of holiness. And is this noblest work of God, that was made for God, in the image of God, made capable of knowing, loving, serving, and enjoying God, to be blotted from existence—to be extinguished by the damps of death ? Go back, infidelity ! Go back ! Thou hast no foundation in truth, thou art supported by no argument, thou art irradiated by no beam from heaven, thou givest birth to no pleasures, and thou findest no advocates, but bold bad men, who have steeled their consciences against themselves, and fled to thee as their last resort.

The sparkling eyes, the smiling countenances, the heavenly serenity, the noble courage of the righteous, and the pleasing hope that animates them in the immediate *prospect of death*, afford strong evidence that God hath prepared for them some better thing beyond the grave. *Dr. Fisk* said to his wife just before his departure, 'Think not when you see this poor feeble body stretched in death, that is your husband. Oh, no ! your husband will have escaped free, and liberated from every clog. He will have new-plumed his glad wings and soared away through the ethereal regions to that celestial city of light and love.' *John Ely* triumphantly exclaimed, 'Pardon, peace, acceptance—Christ is the depository of it all. I am pardoned—accepted. I shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Blessed Jesus, I come to Thee.' *Richard Watson* meekly said, 'I am a worm ; a poor vile worm ; not worthy to lift up its head ; but,' he added, with brightened features, 'this worm is permitted to crawl out of the earth into the garden of its Lord, and there to enjoy the flowers and fruits which sparkle in the New Jerusalem.' And but three weeks ago, *Thomas Smith* was enabled to bear his dying testimony, as he uttered, 'Peace, comfort, joy.'

We are thankful for presumptive evidences that the soul will exist separate from the body, but we do not rest our hope upon them. *Were* a philosopher to demonstrate that there is a very close connection between the soul and the brain, and the possibility of the soul's dissolution when the body dies, that would be no proof that it *will* be dissolved ; any more than a demonstration of the possibility of the sun's extinction to-morrow would be a proof that it *will* be extinguished. The soul's

continued existence depends on the will of God. This Book contains His will. It says the soul shall live for ever. The inspired writers do not attempt formally to prove it. They speak of it as an admitted, established, undeniable truth. What, then, is the *Scripture* evidence that departed saints exist in another world? We think that even the patriarchs had a hope of this. When it is said of this one and of that one, 'And he was gathered to his fathers,' it cannot mean he was laid in a common grave with them. Abraham was buried in the Cave of Machpelah, where the mortal remains of none of his ancestors were deposited. Moses was buried by God, and no man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day. When, therefore, they departed this life they were gathered to the congregation of the righteous in the other world. The Lord said to Moses at Horeb, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,' and Christ, when quoting these words, said, 'God is not the God of the dead but of the living.' Again, said the Saviour, 'Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.' To the penitent thief, He said, 'To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.' And they stoned Stephen saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Paul said to the Corinthians that he 'was willing to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.' To the Philippians he writes, 'that he had a desire to depart and to be with Christ which is far better.' And here he comforts the Thessalonians by informing them that those Christian friends who had been torn from their sanctified embrace by the cold hand of death were with the Lord.

We are thus assured that our companions in tribulation, who have fought the good fight, finished the course, and kept the faith, have not been annihilated, nor have they sunk into a state of unconsciousness, but are now inheriting the promises. The locality of their present residence—for paradise is both a state and a place—we do not pretend to know. But they are safe. They are at rest. Their spirits are no longer oppressed by the body or restrained by the barriers of flesh and blood. They are disimprisoned. Their faculties are strengthened: their capacities enlarged. Their enjoyments more rich and refined. Their prospects are more extensive and delightful. Their anticipations are more enrapturing.

The apostle teaches us

II. THAT THEIR BODIES WILL BE RAISED TO LIFE. *They now sleep.* Sleep is frequently applied in Scripture to the death of the saints. It is a mild and beautiful expression that takes off the terror of dying and unconsciously produces a complacency in the anticipation of it. The term suggests the idea of calm repose, after toil, suffering, and sorrow.

'If a man,' says the Saviour, 'keep My saying, he shall not see death.' He shall not see it in its natural horror and vengeful character. He shall not see it as an enemy, but a friend; not as a messenger of stern justice, but of love. The saints *sleep*. The Latin Christians, at an early period, believing their departed friends would rise again, called the places of their burial *dormitories*, and the Greeks, *cemeteries*, or sleeping-places. As labourers at the close of the day retire to rest, sleep during the night, and rise in the morning refreshed and strengthened; so Christians, at the close of life, sleep during the night of death on the cold couch of the grave, and when the morning of eternity shall break, and their Lord appear, they shall awake to glory and joy.

The bodies that sleep shall be raised. Celsus, of the second century, said, 'It is vile, abominable, impossible, a hope fitter for worms than men.' And modern infidels say, 'It cannot be.' But 'they do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.' With Him all things are possible. He who made the body can raise it. To an omniscient and omnipotent Being, all things are alike easy. Some who have the Bible profess to doubt if the *dead* will be raised again. We think without reason. They must allow, if it be the will of God that He can accomplish it. And why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the *dead*. This is certainly the doctrine of revelation. Enoch, we have every reason to believe, has the same body now that he had when he walked with God on earth. Elijah has the body that was fed at the brook Cherith with flesh brought him by the ravens. The body of Christ, now amid the irradiations of heaven's throne, is the same that bled in Gethsemane and expired on Calvary. The believers who shall be alive at the coming of Christ will be caught up to heaven in their own bodies; and is it likely that these, with the antediluvian saint, and the postdiluvian saint, will have in heaven the bodies they had on earth, and the rest of the saints be deprived of theirs? The Scripture explicitly declares: 'They that *sleep* in the dust shall awake.' 'All that are in the *graves* shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth.' 'He will change our *vile* body.' In what the identity will consist, we know not. But we are assured there will be a resurrection of the same material, however modified. Not a creation, but a restoration of that which for a season had been dropt. The earth of which the body was originally made will be the matter of which the glorified body will be formed. By chemical process we can analyse and refine matter, but we know nothing of its essence. For aught we can tell, God may make the smallest portion of the present body the material of which the future body shall be fashioned. Bodies do not lose their identity by the changes that pass on them here. Job's body was covered with ulcers

the flesh consumed, and scarcely anything but skin left. It was restored to health and vigour; but its identity remained. Lazarus was dead four days. Decomposition and corruption had commenced. A portion of his body had been thrown off in noisome effluvia, and had it been a much greater portion, and Christ had raised the remainder, no one would have hesitated to call it the same body. But if the body of Lazarus that died had been kept in a coffin or a sepulchre, and a body had been created for his soul to enter, there would have been no *resurrection.*

Perhaps an afflicted Christian is ready to exclaim, What, shall my poor, feeble, sickly body be raised again? We answer, Yes; but *without its feebleness or disease.* 'It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.' Thus, though each of us, on the morning of the resurrection, will recognise his body on re-entering it; will be conscious that it is *his own*, just as each is now conscious that the body he has to-day is the same he had ten years ago, yet the change will be glorious, far surpassing our present comprehension. 'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.' That is, such flesh and blood as we now have: flesh fed by blood. The animal life is in the blood. The organs and muscles are fed by it, their waste repaired, their secretions provided, and their heat maintained. But the 'spiritual body' shall be incapable of growth or decay, enlargement or diminution, injury or disease, mutilation or disorganisation. It will be cleansed of all gross and ponderous materials. Blood will be useless. Animal life will be superseded by the life of the spirit. 'Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them.' Thus refined, sublimated, etherealised, celestialised, spiritualised, impassible, indivisible, indestructible, it will transcend in beauty and brilliance every object with which we are acquainted: more lovely than cherub or seraph,—it will be like unto the glorious body of the Saviour.

Their resurrection will be the fruit of the death and resurrection of Christ. 'If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.' Jesus by His death purchased their resurrection. Death was not a part of God's original plan in the formation of man. Sin brought death into the world. Christ on the cross worked out the difficult problem of man's redemption. He endured the penalty. He paid the rigid satisfaction, death for death. He magnified the law. He satisfied justice. He destroyed death by removing its foundation—by killing sin, the parent of death. The body was included in the *redemption.* He thus acquired a legal right to

rescue it. He went into the domains of the grave that He might spoil the spoiler, destroy the destroyer, disperse the gloom, remove the barriers, open the doors, and with tender yet majestic accents say to the slumbering inhabitants, 'Come forth.' It was not possible for Him to be holden of death. The tomb in vain forbade His rise. He rose as our representative; in our nature, and in our name. We dwell not on the *proofs* of His resurrection; but exult to view it as the evidence, pledge, earnest of ours. 'Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.' The resurrection of Christians follows, and is as certain as the resurrection of Christ. He is the Head, they are the members. They are now in Christ, united to Him by a vital faith. At death they sleep in Jesus, and as He rose again, they shall rise again.

Observe *the order in which these events will take place.* The Lord Himself will descend from heaven to mid air, attended by a retinue of angels, arrayed in robes of state, and by all the saints of paradise. He will display His glorious and harmonious attributes. He will come to put the stamp of infinite perfection on all His mediatorial acts, to develop the character and fix the destiny of every human being. Then there shall be a loud *shout* of all the attendants. Then an archangel, as the leader of the celestial hierarchies, shall blow the trump of God. Then the dead in Christ shall rise; all the saints from Abel to the last that will fall under the arrest of death. They will *suddenly* throw off their grave-clothes, shake themselves from the dust, and join in the triumphal song. Man was first formed by a process. God now works by general and slowly-operating laws. But then, 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.' Then those saints who will be alive shall be caught up. No doubt a great and glorious change will suddenly pass on their bodies. Their elements and properties will be altered. Their dependence on food, and relation to earth, will terminate. They will be fitted for a more ethereal region, and for loftier employments. Then the books shall be opened and the solemn procedure of the great judgment commence. Then shall the wicked be silent in darkness. The righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

The apostle teaches

III. Their Mutual Recognition in the Future World. We have already remarked, that the Thessalonians who had been bereaved of beloved friends and relations were sorrowing immoderately, under the impression that they would never see them again. The apostle writes to comfort them. How does he this? By assuring them

that they were not for ever separated, but should be re-united. The expectation of renewed intercourse with earthly friends in a future state is so much in accordance with the principles of reason, with the present constitution of our social and moral nature, that it has been indulged by men in every age, and of every nation. Socrates delighted in the prospect of conversing with Hesiod and Homer. The elder Cato thus expressed his feelings : 'O glorious day! when I shall retire from this low and sordid scene to associate with the divine assembly of departed spirits; and with my dear Cato, that best of sons and most valuable of men. His soul did not desert me, but still looked back upon me in its flight to those happy mansions, to which he was assured I should one day follow him.' The Greeks and Romans peopled their Tartarus and their Elysium with beings retaining all their ancient remembrances. The mother, in the isles of the Pacific, mourning for her children, believes that after her own death she shall rejoin them. The widow in Hindostan burns that she may be with her husband. The Red Indian comforts himself with the hope of meeting with his departed friends in the unknown world beyond the heights of the blue mountains.

There can be little doubt but we shall know each other in the *judgment ;* 'We must all *appear* before the judgment seat of Christ ; that every man may receive the things *done in his body*, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' And we cannot suppose that our mutual knowledge will be instantly obliterated. We are led to conclude from the intimations of Scripture that our faculties will be perfected in heaven ; and if so, memory will not be weakened. Heaven is called our 'Father's house ;' is represented as a 'family,' and its enjoyments social. Can this be realised without mutual knowledge? There is joy among the angels when a sinner repenteth : they minister to the heirs of salvation ; carry them from earth to heaven,—must know them ; then is it likely that the saints will be ignorant of each other? Shall we 'sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,' and not know them? Shall we sing 'the song of Moses,' and not be able to distinguish him from other saints? Good old Jacob under the supposed loss of his favourite, Joseph, believed that he should find him again in another world. David, when his child was dead, said, 'I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.' Lazarus was carried to Abraham's bosom. The rich man was told to '*remember* that in this life he received good things.' Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration knew each other, and were known by Peter, James, and John. John in the apocalyptic vision saw 'the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and heard them cry with a loud voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on

them that dwell on the earth?"' Paul writes to the Colossians, 'Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.' He calls the Philippians his 'brethren, dearly beloved, his joy and crown.' He says to the Thessalonians, 'What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy.' And here he assures us that our departed Christian friends, and we who remain, 'shall be caught up *together* to meet the Lord in the air.' Delightful thought! 'Martha, thy brother shall rise again,' and thou shalt once more enjoy his company. Rachel, wipe away thy tears, thy children are all safe, and thou shalt see them again. Yea, all of you who have been called to mourn the loss of friends who have died in the Lord, have the strongest ground for cherishing the expectation that you shall meet them again, know, love, and converse with them again, and together dwell without interruption or separation. And not only do we expect to meet in that world with our departed friends, but with saints of other climes, of other dispensations, and of other denominations: with patriarchs and prophets, apostles and confessors. There will be no party distinctions, no sectarian prejudices. Calvin and Arminius, Wesley and Whitefield, Clarke and Smith, will see 'eye to eye.' Glorious prospect!

> For if, as holiest men have deem'd, there be
> A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
> To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee,
> And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore,
> How sweet it were in concert to adore
> With those who made our mortal labours light,
> To hear each voice we fear'd to hear no more,
> Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to sight,
> Patriarchs, apostles, and all who taught the right.

IV. THEIR HAPPINESS WILL FLOW FROM CHRIST. 'So shall we ever be *with the Lord*.' This will be the chief ingredient in our cup of bliss; the sum of all our anticipated honour, glory, and felicity. Without a sight of Christ, a resemblance to Christ, the enjoyment of Christ, everything else would fail to supply the wants and gratify the desires of our deathless spirits. Friends might greet us, angels minister unto us, glittering thrones support us, splendid robes cover us, crystal waters and amaranthine flowers surround us; but there would be no real happiness without Christ. The bliss of our first parents was not derived from the fruits and flowers and prospects of Eden, but from the presence of Him who conversed with them as a man with his friend. When communion with Him ceased Eden was

a waste, howling wilderness. But we are fully assured that we shall have the presence of our Lord in heaven. This is His promise: 'Where I am, there shall also My servant be.' 'If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.' For this He prayed: 'Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory.' This was Paul's joyful expectation: 'Willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ which is far better.' This was John's hope: 'When He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.' There will then be no interposing veil. The patriarchs saw Him 'afar off.' Moses and Aaron saw Him through dim types and shadows. We now see Him through a glass darkly, by a mental effort, a reflex act of vision; but then we shall behold Him 'face to face.' 'Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty.' His sufferings are ended. The total eclipse is passed. The clouds of His humiliation are all dispersed. He shines in the full blaze of His uncreated glories. We shall stand under the direct beams of the eternal Sun. We shall see Him in the nature He assumed, and in which He lived and died for us.

> The dear tokens of His passion
> Still His dazzling body bears,
> Cause of endless exultation
> To His ransom'd worshippers:
> With what rapture
> Gaze we on those glorious scars.

And what we see we shall have the privilege to appropriate. When every eye shall turn towards Him, every heart glow with love to Him, and every tongue celebrate His praise, *each* saint shall be permitted to say to the enraptured host, He who sits upon the throne is my Friend, my Brother, my Saviour, my Portion, my All in all. His glory will fall on us, penetrate us, illuminate us, perhaps render body and soul transparent, and assimilate us. We shall resemble the brilliance with which we shall be filled, reflect the splendour we receive, and rise under its influence higher and higher into a brighter resemblance of Himself, the transcendent original of every conceivable excellence.

And this vision, this likeness, this enjoyment will continue for *ever*. We shall walk in His light, live in His life, share in His triumph, partake of His joy, sit by His side, and be pillars in His temple to go no more out. The connection between Him and the saints will never terminate. The kingdom which they shall inherit will have no end. The crown they shall wear will never fade. The fruit with which they shall be fed will be from the tree of life, and they shall be refreshed

with the river of life that will flow eternally from His throne. Yes. He who possesses life in Himself; who is the fountain of life, the Lord and Giver of life, pledges His own eternal life for the immortality of His followers. 'Because I live, ye shall live also.'

It must have struck you, my hearers, that the apostle is here speaking of *Christian believers*, and that they only can derive comfort from the anticipation of events so glorious and so solemn. Then do *you* sustain the character? Has the Gospel come to you, as it did to the Thessalonians, not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance? Does any one remember your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father? Or, are you of those 'who receive not the love of the truth'? If so, hear what Paul by the word of the Lord says, 'The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.' There is *another* and a very *different* society in the other world to the one we have described; a society in which the principles of falsehood and malignity, and the passions of hatred and revenge, will rage with uncontrolled and perpetual violence. And are *you* determined to spend an eternity with such malignant beings and atrocious characters? May the Spirit of God now arrest you! May you cry out with the Psalmist, 'Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men.' With Jacob exclaim, 'O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united!' You need not perish. God hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner. He hath sent Jesus to bless us, by turning away every one of us from His iniquity. Come instantly to Him. 'Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.' His blood can wash away your stains, and fit you for a station with the redeemed on Mount Zion.

Christian believers! Amidst your afflictions, temptations, and persecutions, let the text be your song as you travel through the wilderness, and let the strain swell to its most ecstatic compass as you approach the end of your journey, 'So shall we ever be with the Lord.' And specially, let those of you who are mourning the loss of pious friends *comfort one another with these words.*

SERMON XXI.

CHRIST'S LOVE.

AND TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST, WHICH PASSETH KNOWLEDGE.'
Eph. iii. 19.

IT must be obvious to every attentive reader of the New Testament that the love of Christ is its leading theme—the golden thread that runs through the whole—that it not only stands most prominent, but is made the foundation of a thousand arguments, the subject of a thousand warm emotions. Like the sun, which is not only the most glorious object in the firmament, but which throws its lustre over every other object, and gilds with its beams what would else have been dark and cheerless; so the love of Christ is not only the most glorious subject of this Volume, but it sheds its beautiful light over every other subject, and gilds with its heavenly rays the darkest mysteries of our condition.

The sacred writers took ineffable pleasure in directing the attention of their readers to it, their souls caught fire the moment they touched it, and there was the rapturous exclamation, 'Unto Him that hath loved us!' The inspired writers thought they could never say enough on this subject, they introduced it on all occasions, and in all connections; to it they traced all the high impress of heaven. From it, they showed, flows all our present enjoyment. By it, they enforced obedience to every precept. In it they embodied every ordinance. With it, they combined every providential arrangement and connected all their hopes to future blessedness.

But we must follow the Apostle Paul, about to soar into the bright effulgence of this glorious subject, and when about to train the vision of his spiritual children to sustain the splendours of the 'marvellous light.' What astonishing means did he think necessary to the process of training them for this high contemplation? He offers a prayer, the most wondrous and sublime ever presented. 'He bows his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant them, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might, by His Spirit, in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith; that they, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to

know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fulness of God.'

And what is all this mighty preparation for?

'That they might be able to comprehend the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.'

Let me have your close and prayerful attention to this sublime and all-important subject. 'And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, . . . what in us is dark illumine, what is low raise and support.'

The subject is, the *Love of Christ*—the two particulars on which we dwell—Its *Incomprehensibleness*, and its *Attainableness*.

I. Its Incomprehensibleness. The apostle speaks of its breadth, length, depth, and height, terms which take in everything relative to the dimension and computation of all solids or bodies; and when applied metaphorically to any subject, or thing of a moral or spiritual nature, they must signify the whole of that thing, either in respect to its nature, its properties, or its influence. Hence 'the breadth, length, depth, height of the love of Christ' signify the whole love of Christ, in its manifestations, operations, and effects. His nature is *love*, and in this an infinity of breadth is included; or rather *all* breadth, and length, and depth, and height are lost in this immensity. It comprehends all that is above, all that is below, all that is present, all that is past, and all that is to come.

By the word *passeth*, the apostle does not mean to say that it is *unknowable*, for it is the same term which he uses when he describes 'the *exceeding greatness*' of that power which quickens a dead soul, Eph. i. 19, and the glory of that dispensation '*which excelleth*,' 2 Cor. iii. 10. So the love of Christ far transcends all our love; leaves infinitely behind all our conceptions. It cannot be measured, nor weighed, nor counted. It is of surpassing greatness.

Its breadth passeth knowledge. For it extends to every human being. It is limited to no circle; it is restricted by no circumstances. It knows nothing of geographical boundaries, of natural or artificial distinctions, of the colour of the skin, or of the configuration of the face; mountains sink before it, seas dry up, and colours fade away. It has no limits but the human race itself. And wherever you find a human being, in whatever clime, scorched at the equator or frozen at the pole; of whatever colour, from the fairest European to the sablest African; of whatever condition, polished by science, or uncivilised in the woods, in that human being you find an object of the love of Christ.

And here you will observe, that this is not a love of *complacency*—not a mere general benevolence, which delights in the diffusion of

happiness among the subjects (obedient) of His government. *We* love persons for their personal attractions, accomplishments, or endowments, some excellence, real or imaginary. But the world which Christ's love has embraced is guilty, awfully guilty, depraved, radically, totally depraved—deformed, horribly deformed—ungrateful, basely ungrateful—rebellious, audaciously rebellious. There was nothing in us lovely, or pure, or meritorious to attract His attention, or to deserve His regard. Lord, what is man? And dost Thou open Thine eyes on such an one and deign to cast a glance at him? Whoever heard of a king selecting as his spouse one who was at once diseased and deformed, 'wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked'? Yet hear the language of Christ, 'When I passed by and saw thee polluted in thy blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, live; and behold thy time was a time of love; and I spread My skirt over thee, yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, and thou becamest Mine.' Oh, how wonderful! that instead of consuming a world of such miserable delinquents and offensive creatures with the fire of His wrath, He should unsolicitedly, spontaneously, disinterestedly have wrapped it in the mantle of His love, surely 'passeth knowledge.'

Its length passeth knowledge. It reaches from everlasting to everlasting. This is not the place to enter on the important doctrine of our Lord's Divinity. We only remark, that all the perfections of Deity, those profound, and overwhelming glories of His nature, are attributed in the Scriptures to Jesus Christ. He stands before us arrayed in all their pomp; the brightness of His Father's glory, 'the express image of His person.'

The love of Christ is therefore the love of an infinite nature. If He were a mere man, His love could not pass knowledge. What man has felt, man can conceive. Love can be measured by the nature which exercises it. But as this is Divine, it can only be known by the Divine nature. It must also be eternal, as all the other attributes of that nature. 'It was ere time began his race, ere glowed with stars the ethereal blue.' It was not a transient movement of compassion, a quick and sudden but fleeting feeling of affection. He did not begin to love the world when He first visited it. He loved it in idea before it existed in reality. The plan of its redemption reposed in His mind from eternity. For it was in the counsels of eternity that His love induced Him to undertake our cause. When Jehovah foresaw the world's revolt, and when the enquiry was made, How shall the honour of the Divine government be vindicated, and yet an honourable peace be made? 'Whom shall I send? and who will go for us? then it was, that the Son of God said, "Here am I, send Me;" and He was 'verily ordained

before the foundation of the world.' And did He withdraw it, when the world actually revolted? Listen to the promise immediately given. 'The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.' And it continued when all flesh corrupted their way; for amid the terrible judgments that descended, there were always streaks and manifestations of mercy. One family was selected from the general corruption, to whom were committed the sacred oracles, and among whom a purer form of worship was established. And yet, to say nothing of the depravity of Gentile nations, the history of the Jews was a history of ingratitude and obstinacy; and yet age after age, for four thousand years, His love to our world continued. It still continues. One generation after another passes away, but *it* is changeless, permanent, unwearied—it knows no decay—it grows not old—it can never die—it will therefore be reaching into eternity. Well may we therefore exclaim, 'Oh, the length, and the depth, and the breadth, and the height of the love of God!' And well may He say, 'Yea, I have loved thee, with an everlasting love;' and that which is everlasting surely 'passeth knowledge.'

The depth of it passeth knowledge. It stooped from the heaven of heavens to that point of humiliation beyond which there is no conceivable descent. It was love in the work of redemption, like the 'spirit of the living creature' in Ezekiel's vision, that actuated, and impelled, and directed all His motions. And the strength of His love was severely *tested* at every step. The justice, the holiness, the truth of Jehovah required His *assumption* of the nature on which He had set His heart. And His love did not refuse. But what must have been the intensity of that love which led Him, who dwelt with the Father and the Spirit, in all the splendour of His unapproachable magnificence, to put off His robes of light and to array Himself in the garment of mortality, to veil the coruscations of His glory and suffer the deepest obscuration. But He cheerfully did it. When the fulness of time was come, He rent the heavens and came down on the wings of love. 'Lo! I come to do Thy will, O God.' 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet, for your sakes, He became poor that ye, through His poverty, might be rich.' 'Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' What humiliation was this! There is nothing like it—nothing with which we dare to compare it. It is the mystery of mysteries, the miracle of miracles, before whose splendour all other wonders vanish.

And observe, His love drew Him to human nature in its *very lowest* condition. Born of indigent parents—thrust into a stable—driven, before He was two years old, a fugitive through the wilderness—as He grew up, employing the hands that stretched out the heavens, in handling the chisel and the plane.

Houseless, homeless, and oft wanting the necessaries of life, He said, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.' To this end was He born, and for this end did He come into the world, 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister.' And all the journeys He took, all the temptations He resisted, all the instructions He gave, all the prayers He offered, all the diseases He healed proclaimed a love that is unfathomable. But it still, if possible, more strikingly appears in His endurance of the *penalty* due to our sins. And remember, He was never taken by *surprise*. He met with nothing that He had not from the beginning foreknown, and on which He had not fully calculated. Now mark His *conduct*. With the tragic scene full in view—knowing that He should be traduced as an impostor—that He should be *betrayed*, *denied*, *accused*, that He should have to pass through the *agony* in the garden, and endure the *crucifixion* on Calvary, that 'the iniquity of us all' should be laid on Him, that it should even 'please the Lord to bruise Him,' in the prospect of all this, what do we behold? *Submission*, patient submission; yes! and more, joy, delight in the very prospect. That love, always glorious as the crisis approached, acquired brighter lustre, a deeper tenderness, a mightier strength, it will not let Him rest. 'I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished.' 'Tis done. 'My Lord, my love is crucified:' demonstration can go no farther. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' No obscurity veils its glorious manifestation. Fathom it if you can. Angels desire to look into it. But, O cherubims, to you it is mystery. 'It passeth knowledge.'

Its height passeth knowledge. It raises us into the possession of blessings inexpressible and inconceivable. All the truth, the purity, the happiness in the world spring from the love of Christ. It provides *deliverance* for us from the blindness of our minds, the incrustation of our hearts, the insensibility of our consciences, the guilt, power, love, and defilement of our sins. It *raises* us into the *favour*, the friendship, the family and the fellowship of God. It makes us His *brethren*, His *portion*, His peculiar *treasure*. Kings and priests unto God, sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Love which provides for our guidance. Love that shall raise us above the fear of death, and the conquest of the grave. Love that shall

save all who believe from the darkness, the confusion, the horror, the shrieking, the burning of hell, and raise them to the honours, glories, and felicities of heaven. We shall enter into His joy, share in His triumphs, sit by His side and join in the song, 'Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.'

Now, if you cannot conceive the prodigious evil of sin, all the anguish of a guilty conscience, the depth of the fathomless abyss, then the love which saves you from it 'passeth knowledge.' If 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him;' then the love which raises us to its possession 'passeth knowledge.'

II. Its Attainableness. For the apostle prays that you may '*know* the love of Christ which passeth knowledge,' and there is no contradiction here; for that may be known in one respect which cannot be known in another. We may know that a thing really exists without knowing the *mode* of its existence. We may know it in part without knowing it perfectly. To know the love of Christ is *to acknowledge it.*

To acknowledge it with *approbation.* That it is the love, not of a mere man, but of the God-man; for its 'breadth, and depth, and length, and height passeth knowledge.' And if this be not worthy of your admiration, what is? Tell us not of the extent to which, in some instances, conjugal, fraternal, parental or filial love has been carried. Talk no more of patriotism. Regard no longer the love of Damon and Pythias, of Nisus and Euryalus, of David and Jonathan, for it loses its charm, it sinks into insignificance when contrasted with the love of Christ. 'Greater love hath no man than this.' Acknowledge it, praise it, publish it. To love our parents and children is only natural tenderness and affection. To love our friends, but common justice. To love and do good to strangers, but an ordinary duty of humanity—the poor, is but an act of generosity. But to love Christ is to love Him with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and this is our bounden duty and highest joy.

To feel your need of it. You are not to regard it as a splendid object for mere admiration and conversation, but one in which you are deeply interested. Its sacrifices were so costly, that be assured it would never have been manifested had you not *needed* it. But to *feel* this, you must feel yourselves to be sinners, lost and undone.

He loved you unto the death that He might save you from your sins. And can you have a knowledge of this and yet continue in your sins?

Can you turn away scornful and unmoved from this love? If so, your ingratitude 'passeth knowledge.' Its guilt, its baseness, its blackness, find no parallel in heathens, who never heard the name of Christ; in devils who were never redeemed by His blood; and you must fall under the malediction, 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.' But look again, and may the sight affect your heart. . . .

To experience it. You may perceive and feel that the blessings it has procured are adapted to your case; that He is an all-sufficient and suitable Saviour; but what of that, if you do not realise these blessings in your own experience, and know He is your Saviour? It is only *faith* that can apprehend and appropriate the love of Christ. Faith makes the blessings all your own. Can *you* therefore say with *Paul*, 'The life which I now live I live by faith on the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me'? With *Peter*, 'Whom, not having seen, we love; in whom believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory'? With *John*, 'Unto Him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His blood, be honour and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.'?

Do you *know* that you are pardoned? That you are brought nigh by the blood of Christ? And, because ye are sons, that He sent forth the Spirit of His Son in your hearts, crying Abba, Father?

If so, I need not ask, Do you love Him? For it is in the very nature of love, to beget love. 'We love Him because He first loved us.'

You cannot be grateful for benefits of which you have no consciousness. The poor man does not feel gratitude to the rich man merely because he is rich and has the power to supply his wants. Nor the rich man towards the physician merely because he possesses the knowledge of a medicine that would heal his diseases and relieve his pains. Nor the man who has been sentenced to punishment, to a king, merely because in him is lodged the power to mitigate or to pardon. No—the gratitude of the poor man arises from the generous liberality of the rich man in supplying his wants. Of the sick man, from the remembrance of the tenderness and success with which the physician exerted his skill. Of the man condemned, from the pardon which the king has been pleased to bestow. So you cannot be grateful to Jesus, unless He has pardoned you, healed you, enriched you.

To increase in it. To have more impressive, influential, enlarged apprehensions of it. That your expanded hearts, being dilated more and more, may be rendered capable of receiving still larger degrees of it, until ye are 'filled with all the fulness of God.' This is knowledge, interesting, important, *saving* knowledge, without which a knowledge of

trade, etc., will avail nothing. I only add, daily *meditate* upon the love of Christ.

Shew your love to Him, by keeping His commandments.

By your *zeal* for His honour, and the conversion of souls here, let 'the love of Christ constrain you.' By virtue of your vital union with Him, catch the principle of pure, active, pitying, unbounded benevolence. Let your love be as a stream, gushing from and fed by that exhaustless fountain, a tide setting in from the ocean of His infinite love, bearing you away to duty and to sacrifice, until He says, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

SERMON XXII.

CHRIST AN INTERCESSOR.

'He ever liveth to make intercession for them.'—*Heb.* vii. 25.

Among the ancient people of God these three great and important offices were sustained: the *prophetic*, the *sacerdotal*, and the *regal*. In the appointment of prophets, priests, and kings to their respective offices, the hand of God was especially to be recognised; and at the time they were, by His command, to be anointed with a rich and consecrated oil,—at once the emblem and the pledge of those gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, which should imbue their minds with the necessary qualifications for their office, and so confer upon them the high sanction of heaven in the discharge of their respective duties.

In some instances we find *two* of these offices sustained by the same individual, as was the case with *Melchisedec* and *David*; but never more than two; in general they were found separate and distinct, each of them involving duties which required all the attention and care in the power of one individual to bestow.

To the discharge of *all* these offices, however, and that in the most perfect manner, Jesus Christ was set apart; and for this purpose He was anointed, not with oil, but that of which it was the emblem—the Holy Spirit—which was given to Him without measure. Thus anointed, He comes before us in an accredited form. He is not a mere voluntary Saviour, but one, and the only one appointed by heaven to the office, and furnished thence with all necessary qualifications for the mighty undertaking. In this epistle He is chiefly presented to us in the character of a priest. One great branch of the priest's office was to offer sacrifice, and this, we have already shown, Christ performed; another important part was intercession, and to this we now call your attention. 'He ever liveth to make intercession for them.' Let us notice—

I. The great work in which Christ is now engaged. All the information we possess on this subject is derived from the Holy Scriptures. *Reason* can add nothing. Our rule should bow to the authority of God's Word. An *intercessor*, in our language, commonly signifies *one who offers petitions in behalf of another*. St. John has used a word translated *advocate*, which denotes either a person who in a court of judicature, under the appellation of *patron*, attended a client,

and in countenancing, devising, and interceding for him, took an efficacious care of his interests; or an agent of one of the Roman States, who took a similar care of its interests before the Government, and interceded, from time to time, with the Emperor on its behalf. And this is one of the offices assumed by Jesus Christ. Let us notice—

1. *The necessity and certainty of His intercession.* This is one part of His priesthood. He has entered the Holy Place, not only as a forerunner; taken His seat at the right hand of God, not only as a king, but also as a priest. How strikingly was this typified. The office of the Jewish high priest consisted of these two parts. First, offering the sacrifice; second, the presentation of it in the Holy of Holies, with prayer and intercession unto God. Sprinkling of the blood *within* the Holy Place was for atonement, as well as killing the beast *without*. Both were atoning acts (Lev. xvi. 11-16). Or rather, the latter was the same action continued. If the high priest had only offered the sacrifice he had not been a *perfect* high priest, for to enter the Holy Place was the proper peculiar work of the high priest, that which constituted the difference between him and other priests. *They* killed and offered the sacrifices without as well as he, but he *only* was permitted to approach the Holy Place *with blood;* and this but once a year. This was the high prerogative of the high priest. *Intercession* is therefore the perfection of the priesthood. Hence, if Christ had not gone into heaven, He had not been a complete priest. Indeed, the Levitical priesthood would be yet in force, for the types were not to give way until all the truth signified by their ministry was fully accomplished.

But we know He *has* entered. 'When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.' He first suffered and then entered into glory. He entered *by virtue of His blood.* On the *cross* the oblation was made. From it the smoke of the infinitely meritorious sacrifice ascended. With His own most precious blood He consecrated a new and living way. As He approached, every obstacle disappeared; the everlasting gates flew open. The cherubims who guarded the way to the tree of life sheathed their flaming swords and fell back, and our great High Priest presented Himself before Jehovah. This was not only typified, but it is declared in the plainest and strongest terms. 'He *is* at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' He entered into heaven itself to appear in the presence of God for us, and He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

2. *The place of His intercession.* This is sometimes called the right hand of God: the throne of God: heaven itself: the holy place: the sanctuary: the *true* tabernacle, in allusion to its type, the tabernacle that was erected in the wilderness where the law was originally given,

and where God first revealed Himself to His chosen people. From it the Temple was derived, and to it all its ordinances and services were exactly conformed (chap. ix. 2-5). Here was the type, a symbol of the Divine Presence, formed to represent that transcendent glory in which Jehovah dwells, who is 'the blessed and only Potentate.' His essence pervades immensity, yet there is a *local* display of His glory—a place in which He sits enthroned in visible magnificence—a central point to which all the happy intelligences in the universe will be collected. Viewing then the whole creation as one vast, extended temple, this place may be considered as the Holy of Holies, the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, concealed from the gaze of mortals, and in which the *true* Shekinah has in a peculiar manner fixed His residence, and where the splendours of His countenance are fully displayed, to the astonishment and delight of the innumerable company who encircle His glorious throne.

There Jesus exercises the functions of a priest. As one who was holy and undefiled, it was fit that He should officiate, in an undefiled sanctuary, as the great High Priest—that He should have the highest temple, as called immediately by God, that He should officiate before Him.

3. *The manner of His intercession.* It evidently includes—

The presentation of His sacrifice before God. There can be no priest without a sacrifice. 'Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.' The nature of His sacrifice we have already noticed; with its blood He entered heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

His crucified humanity He solemnly presents to the Father as giving Him a right to plead for all the blessings He purchased by it. This is, as it were, showing His credentials or full powers to intercede for us. In that human nature is seen an affecting symbol of His astonishing sufferings, and of the efficacy of His sacrifice. Yes, visit yonder temple not made with hands, draw aside the veil of the sanctuary, approach the throne of God, and what do you behold? *A victim!* Yes, amidst all the splendours of that throne, He wears the marks of a *Lamb newly slain.* His bleeding wounds are seen; His blood is still flowing—it has a voice, it speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; *his* cried for vengeance, *Christ's* for mercy and salvation.

He pleads for us. Intercession in its very nature involves petition. In what way He signifies His will to the Father, whether with or without words, we cannot determine; it is enough for us to know that He *does it* in such a way as that God *hears* and gives Him His heart's desire. His intercession is doubtless founded on His oblation, though

distinct from it. Oblation is the price paid for the redemption of sinners. Intercession is the powerful argument founded on that price. Oblation is but one act of short duration, 'the offering of the body of Christ once for all.' Intercession is of perpetual duration. Let us not suppose that it is unbecoming the human nature of Christ in its glorious exaltation to pray to God. He did not think so. Before He went to heaven He said to His disciples, 'I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter.' And the Father says to Christ, in His exalted state, 'Ask of Me and I will give Thee the heathen for Thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession.'

He presents our prayers and services. He sanctifies them, and renders them acceptable to God. They are represented as incense, ascending from the censer of our great High Priest: and 'there was given unto Him much incense, that He should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.' And thus our spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ. Our imperfect services, when united with His mediation, acquire a new and more exalted character, and for His sake are regarded with complacency by our heavenly Father.

4. *The extent of His intercession.* Many suppose, from John xvii. 9, 'I pray for them: I pray not for the world,' that it is limited. But it certainly does not follow that because He prayed for His disciples on a very particular occasion, when they were on the brink of a very heavy trial, that the world is for ever excluded from all interest in His prayers. Shortly after He says, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for all which shall believe on Me, through their word, that the *world* may believe that Thou hast sent Me.'

That He prays for believers is certain; that He prays for others is equally certain. 'He gave His life a ransom for *all*.' It was predicted that He should make intercession for the world. On the cross He prayed for Pilate and Herod, Jewish mob and Roman soldiers, for the countless multitude of His revilers and murderers. 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.' And He commanded that supplications should be made for all men.

5. *The prevalency of His intercession.* We may be assured that it will be ever successful when we consider His dignity, and that the glory of God is always the *end* of His intercession; that what He pleads is always agreeable to the will of the Father, and that it is performed by virtue of a commission or office He has received from the Father. 'Whatsoever, then, He asks He receives; the Father heareth Him.'

But if Christ, says one, prays for all sinners, and His prayers are always successful, then all sinners must be saved. This does not follow.

He does not pray that they may be saved *in* their sins, but that means of salvation may be afforded them. And they are afforded. Justice would immediately seize the sinner, were it not for Christ's intercession. He prays, 'Let it alone another year, but after, thou shalt cut it down.' So He prays that the Father would sanctify and perfect believers, but always *in the use of the means.*

6. *The exclusiveness of His intercession.* The papists allow of many mediators. They pray to the Virgin Mary, as the mother of grace and mercy, the queen and gate of heaven, the advocate of sinners, as having the power to destroy all heresies in the world, and as being all things to all. In their Prayer Book they ask her to command her Son by the right and authority of a mother. The Scriptures, however, know of but *one*. There is one God, and *one* mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. We have *an* advocate, not *many*. Christ needs no joint intercessor. He *alone* is able to plead our cause. It is blaspheming to set up any other; idolatry, clothing a creature with omnipotence. For how can any saint in heaven attend to the numerous petitions presented from different parts at once?

The tenderness of His intercession. 'We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' 'It behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest.' He was a perfect man, had all the affections of humanity. What tender sympathy did He manifest while here below! He went about doing good: healing the sick, cleansing the leper, weeping with the bereaved, raising the dead. And has He lost His compassion since His glorious exaltation? Oh no! His tender heart is still the same. Our humanity is still worn by Him. In us it sojourns upon earth, exposed to sickness, decay, and death; in Him it dwells amid the living splendours of the eternal throne. He is still the head, we the members; the bond of union is not dissolved by His elevation. While He sits enthroned, amidst the praises of the principalities and powers who lay their honours at His feet, He does not forget us. 'He is not ashamed to call us brethren.' In all our affliction He is afflicted. Are we persecuted? He remembers that 'He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.'

8. *The perpetuity of His intercession.* 'He *ever* liveth.' The apostle is not speaking here of that life which He possesses, in a pre-eminent and infinite degree, as a Divine person. Life exists in Him in all its fulness. It is inconceivable. But of His *mediatorial* life, which was the consequence of the perfect sacrifice He offered when He expired on the cross. 'He died *once*, but He dieth no more.' He possesseth this life in all its splendour and in all its plenitude, and not for Himself, but

for us. And herein He is distinguished from the Levitical priests. They truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death. 'But this man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. His sacerdotal office did not cease at death as theirs did. No; His death, His voluntary death, was a part of His office. His life He soon resumed, and is now a priest for ever, after the power of an endless life. Empires, the most renowned, rise and fall, but the existence of our Great High Priest moves on; nothing is hurried, nothing lingers in the whole of His administration. Clad in sacred vestments, He serenely sees all things advancing by a steady progress to their final consummation. Thus He spake when He appeared in His sacerdotal robes to John, 'I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore.'

Now, with the perpetuity of His existence is connected the duration of His office. 'He ever liveth.' 'He hath an unchangeable priesthood.' He derived it from no predecessor, it is in no way participated by a cotemporary, it will never be delivered over into the hands of another. It is a priesthood not subject to succession nor alteration. 'He abideth a priest for ever.' Certainly all His priestly functions are greatly heightened in worth and importance by the consideration of their constancy and perpetuity.

He who interceded for Abel, for Paul, for the martyrs, intercedes for *us.*

II. THE BENEFITS FLOWING TO US FROM IT. After the Jewish high priest, on the great day of atonement, had offered the sacrifice, taken its blood into the Holy of Holies, sprinkled it on the mercy-seat, and made intercession for the people, being charged with messages of mercy, he went out to the thousands assembled at the door waiting for him, and said, 'The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.' In like manner we see that the great High Priest of our profession, having put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, rose from the dead, and in the most solemn and affecting manner gave His benediction to His disciples. 'He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.' The connection between the resurrection of our Lord and this sacerdotal act is clearly shown by the apostle. 'God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.' We must remark that one benefit of His intercession is,

1. *The bestowment of the Holy Spirit.* 'In the last great day of the feast, Jesus cried, If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink, and he that believeth on Me, as the Scriptures have said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This He spake of the Spirit,

which they that believe on Him should receive.' 'It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, for if I depart I will send Him unto you.' 'I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.' 'The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.' The Spirit in all His plenitude was reserved to grace the triumph of our ascended Lord. 'Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men.' Hence we find as a proof that He had taken His seat on the mediatorial throne ten days after His ascension, that He poured out His Spirit abundantly; and let it be remembered that the communication of the Spirit is yet the result of His mediation; every convincing, quickening influence we feel is to be ascribed to the intercession of Christ.

2. *The greatest encouragement to come to Him for salvation.* His ability to save is founded on His intercession, *seeing* He ever liveth to make intercession for us. Power belongeth to Him, as a Divine person, absolutely, independently, exclusively. But it is the power with which He is invested as the High Priest of His Church, His *official* power, of which the apostle here speaks. By no other power could He have interposed to rescue sinners. But possessing mediatorial power, He is able to save to the uttermost:—

Sinners of the vilest character: His murderers, idolaters, &c.

From the lowest depths of apostacy: David, Peter, backsliders.

At the last moment of your lives: Dying thief.

To perfect the work He has begun: To cleanse from all sin, and to *keep* you clean.

He is able to save. But, alas, how few enjoy this salvation! *How is this?* They do not apply to Him for it. 'Ye will not come that ye might have life.' This implies a conviction of your guilt and ruin. Man by nature wishes to be his own saviour, he is unwilling to accept deliverance from another; when, however, he is fully convinced, his views are different: he hears the thunders, and pierced with his guilt he cries out, 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?' He may attempt to throw off these convictions, but they grow upon him, they strike their fangs deeper and deeper; he tries to be obedient for the future; but then what is to become of the past? At last, shaken from every sandy foundation, shut up, hemmed in, he flies to the altar of the great High Priest and hears Him say, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.' Are any of you thus convinced? Let me remind you, another benefit of Christ's intercession is

3. *Freedom of access to God.* Every obstacle is removed; through the blood of Jesus we have freedom and access with confidence. God is reconciled, thy pardon is purchased and freely presented; do not doubt, come with boldness, and take the purchase of His blood.

4. *It promises support and comfort under all our trials*, however numerous our enemies, however mighty; but stronger is He who is for us than all who are against us. He has overcome for us. However great may be our sufferings, let us recollect we have a merciful High Priest, who is very pitiful and acquainted with sorrow. He remembers us. His heart is still made of tenderness. His bowels yearn with love. By Him make your requests known to God. In all your approaches look at your powerful advocate.

We have a friend in the heavenly court. He will present our petitions. He will introduce us into the presence of God. Shall *our* intercessions then flag? Our hands hang down? Our cries grow faint? Shall we cast away our confidence which has great recompense of reward? No! says the apostle; 'Let us hold fast our profession without wavering, for He is faithful that has promised.' The Jewish high priest entered the Holy Place bearing on a plate near his heart the names of the twelve tribes, engraved on twelve precious stones. So Christ in heaven appears, bearing our names near His heart. Hence the challenge of the apostle, 'Who shall lay anything to God's precious ones?' perhaps in allusion to the gems on the breast of the high priest. 'Who?' to this compact of jewels on the breast of our Intercessor. 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died to offer an atonement. 'Yea, rather, that is risen again,' to prove the validity of His sacrifice: yea, 'who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.'

5. *Prospects of future felicity.* He has passed within the veil, as our forerunner, and is now employed in making preparations for our entrance. Jesus said, 'I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am ye may be also.' 'Let not your hearts be troubled, in My Father's house are many mansions.' 'I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' 'Because I live ye shall live also.' 'Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory.' 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when He shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.' 'He shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. Having this hope may we purify ourselves even as He is pure.' Amen.

SERMON XXIII.

LOOKING FOR THE SAVIOUR.

'LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE AND THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD, AND OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.'—*Titus* ii. 13.

THE apostle, in the preceding verse, gives us a summary of Christian duties. 'The grace of God,' he remarks, that 'hath appeared unto all men, teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly and righteously in this evil world.' In the text he informs us, that God's design in teaching us to enter on this new life of faith and charity, to cultivate sobriety, righteousness, and godliness, is that we may be prepared for future glory and blessedness. We are trained on earth, by the exercise of our faculties in the light and love of truth, for nobler employments in the kingdom of heaven. Here it is, that by the purification of our souls, and conformity to Christ, we are made meet for His eternal vision and fruition.

Or, the apostle, knowing our natural aversion to these duties, the numerous temptations we should have to neglect them, adduces the text as the strongest motive, the highest encouragement to perform them. Seeing ye are 'looking for the appearing of the Saviour,' to be consistent, 'deny yourselves.' Or, if you deny yourselves, you *may* look, it is your privilege to look.

Indeed we frequently find our apostle calling upon us to *look off* from things *temporal* and earthly to things *spiritual* and heavenly. The importance of 'the life that *now is*' will only be seen when it is considered in connection with 'the life that is to come.'

And certainly nothing is more calculated to detach our hearts from the *vanities* of earth, to *guard* us against its carnal pleasures, to *sustain* us amid its numerous ills and to *animate* us on our long and toilsome journey, as a steady looking for the Saviour.

I. THE APPEARING OF THE SAVIOUR. But here we must notice in the first place, the appellations by which He is designated.

The great God. The clause may be rendered, 'the appearing of the *glory* of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ,' or, which is still more literal, 'the glorious appearing of the great God and Saviour of us, Jesus Christ.' It is a rule in Greek, that, when two or more personal nouns (of the same gender, number, and case) are coupled together by

the conjunction *και*, and the article is prefixed to the *first*, but *not* to the *second*, those two or more nouns denote *one* and the *same* person. It is therefore plain that by the names, 'the great God and Saviour of us,' two persons are not introduced; but *only one*. And this will be seen more obviously when you notice that the apostle speaks of 'the *appearing* of the great God;' for we never read of the *appearance* of the Father. And again, as He is to appear for judgment, it is plain that it must refer to the *Son*, for 'the *Father* judgeth no man.' We therefore regard the term as expressive of the true and proper Divinity of our Lord.

When Christ in other passages is called '*God*,' the enemies of His divinity say, it means a being of a high and exalted nature, because *angels* are called *gods*, on account of their transcendent dignity. But surely it does not follow, that because angels in one or two passages in the Old Testament are called *gods*, that therefore Christ, though called God in the most unqualified and unrestricted manner, is only a mere creature.

But our text may settle the point. Angels may be termed gods; but *the great God* is certainly the incommunicable appellation of Jehovah. But it is not on a single passage merely that we rest the proof of this important doctrine: the apostle has thrown over all his pages such radiations of the glory of Christ, which if brought together would form such a constellation of celestial attributes; if condensed to a focus would exhibit such a display of concentrated glory; as would dazzle and overwhelm us. He represents Christ as the Creator and Preserver of all things, material, intellectual, and moral. He says that to Christ belongs the sovereign adjudication, irreversible and without appeal, of the everlasting state of the whole human race. He declares that Christ is the proper object of confidence for the acquisition of the greatest possible blessings, and of veneration, love, and delight, in preference to every thing created; that ascriptions are made to Him of supreme adoration, comporting with the highest celebrations of Jehovah in the Old Testament; that the loftiest created intelligences adore Him; and that He has all Divine *perfections* as well as *titles* which belong *only to Deity*. A first principle; an article of supreme importance; a foundation stone in the temple of truth; a star of the first magnitude in the hemisphere of Christian doctrine: yea, the central sun, around which the whole system revolves in all its harmony and splendour. But the apostle here speaks not only of Christ's essential dignity, but of His mediatorial character.

The Saviour. Emphatically *the* Saviour—distinguished from all other saviours by the glory of the salvation He effected; by the innumerable multitude He has redeemed; by the arduous nature of the

undertaking; by the immense price He paid for their redemption.

Jesus Christ. These are also official names. Jesus is a name of the same import with Saviour; and Christ is equivalent to the Hebrew word Messiah, and signifies the anointed one. These words then give us a full view of our Redeemer's exalted character—as the supreme God, and as the Saviour of man; and these views of Him should always go together. Anointed, appointed, typified, promised, predicted, desired, commissioned, accredited, sanctioned, accepted, successful Saviour. To save, is His office and business.

His appearing. This evidently refers to His second coming—His appearing at the last day. He once appeared in lowliness, when His visage was marred more than any man; for He humbled Himself to take upon Him our nature in all its weaknesses, He condescended to be degraded to a level with the beings He came to save. But '*glorious*' is His appearance *now*. He descends clothed in celestial radiance, riding on the clouds, attended by a splendid retinue of angels—a God in grandeur. From His glorified *body* shall start forth coruscations of brightness, which shall terrify and overwhelm His enemies, while they attract the admiration of His friends. Then His dignity was an object of *faith*, now of *sight*. Then there were some hardy enough to dispute His *Messiahship*, to deny His *Divinity*; but now every eye shall see Him, etc.

But contrast His *former* with His *present* appearance in their *design*. Then He came to found a kingdom—to acquire a title to the government of a ruined province of His Father's domains; now He comes to be enthroned in the sight of, and to the confusion of His enemies. Then He came to wage a war; now He comes to gather His elect and to make their redemption complete.

He shall then bestow upon us that *blessedness* which is now the object of our *hope*; for in the text hope is evidently put for the *object* of hope.

Happiness we hope for. We hope for the *resurrection of our bodies*, and Christ, by that power whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself, shall change our vile bodies that He may fashion them like unto His glorious body. For a *public acquittal* we hope, and Christ will then proclaim our character and express His approbation. We hope for *freedom from evil*—affliction, temptation and every sorrow of our probationary state. Christ will admit us into our eternal home, where sickness and sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. We hope for the *possession of all good.* Christ will introduce us to angels and to God and we shall be 'satisfied' for ever.

II. The Attitude of His Followers. They are looking for the

appearing of the great God and Saviour. This implies *firm belief* that He will appear.

In any other state of mind the term 'looking' would be inapplicable. It implies such a fixedness of feeling and of purpose, as to render it quite inappropriate were its object to be a matter of simple possibility, or of mere supposition. It plainly indicates, if you are the persons of whom it is asserted, that you regard the event as one of indubitable reality. Not something that *may* fall out, if such or such circumstances should occur, but something which will certainly be brought to pass, whatever opposition may be in its way.

The future appearing of Christ must form a part of your deliberate and cherished creed. Not a mere speculation originating in fancy; and indulged in because it is agreeable. Not a conjecture suggested by appearances, and adhered to as being more probable, as well as more useful, than any other conjecture that could be formed on the subject. It is not the result of a process of reasoning liable to errors and doubts. It is a point of settled belief which you must embrace and maintain, without qualification or reserve, because it is the testimony of Him who 'knows all things,' and who 'cannot lie.' It is the subject of prophecy—of promise—of positive Divine assurance. You cannot therefore *doubt* it, without impeaching the Divine perfections, without alleging that He has predicted what He has not power to accomplish; your conviction should derive strength from the frequency with which it is here offered to your attention. It is stated in that variety of language, of imagery, and of connection, which is calculated to make the deepest impression on your minds, and is interwoven with the whole teaching of Revelation.

It is not mentioned as an event that may be detached from the other great events of Scripture; but is a part of the grand mediatorial scheme. Believe it firmly; entertain it cordially; let it engage your minds deeply—frequently—not merely when suggested, but select it for solemn meditation.

Ardent desire for it. He is your Saviour, and we have seen that at His appearing He will bestow upon you that blessedness which is now the object of your hope; you cannot therefore but long for His coming. Such a desire is the fruit of your faith and hope. You are confident that the event will take place, and that when it does take place, you will receive the consummation of your wishes; you therefore warmly desire it. Hear our apostle, 'We groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven.' He viewed it as the legitimate object of his sincere and fervent wishes. He anticipated with joy the transcendent felicity that awaited him; he hungered and thirsted after its reality, as that whose value was as incalculable as its attainment was undoubted.

'Therefore we are always confident, knowing whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord;' we are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Set your affections on things above, for where your treasure is there will your heart be also. Use the world without abusing it, while you look not at the things which are temporal and seen, but at the things which are unseen and eternal. You will then

'Long to behold Him arrayed
With glory and light from above.'

Habitual preparation for it. For if you are not prepared for it, you are not desiring it. It is an event to be feared and deprecated, and from which the mind must recoil with alarm and aversion. Those of you who have not yet believed in His blood, become His disciples, who are among the number of His enemies, if you have not the principles and character that He will approve of, if you are not prepared to meet Him, and to stand before Him, and to become partakers of His happiness, if you live and die destitute of those qualifications which He Himself has declared necessary for your admission into heaven—then when He appears, you must be punished with everlasting banishment from the glory of His presence to that place where hope never comes.

This is the reason, sinners, why you turn away from this event as an object of terror, why you labour to banish it from your thoughts, or erase it from your creed. Instead of longing for the appearing of the Saviour, the sinner dreads it; instead of crying 'Come Lord Jesus,' he cries, Put off Thy coming—defer judgment, the approach of which I cannot bear. Thy coming will be the time of my destruction, Thy appearing will discover my shame, Thy glory will be my despair, Thy voice will be the sentence of my eternal misery; instead of hastening to meet Thee I will avoid Thy presence, and call on the rocks and mountains to hide me from Thine eye.

Yes! there is a dissoluble connection between the preparation and the reward which Christ will bring with Him; so that those who are not distinguished by the one cannot attain to the other. And those only who now have the mind that was in Christ have any *right* to assume the attitude of waiting for His appearing, or can assume that attitude with any degree of safety or consistency. Examine to which of these classes you belong. Have you an interest in Christ Jesus? Do you live by faith on the Son of God? Show your faith by your works. You cannot enter heaven while your principles, and dispositions, and habits are all in irreconcilable hostility to the exercises and enjoyments of that blissful region. Were it possible for you to enter with such principles and dispositions, you could not be happy. Then deny yourselves of all

ungodliness; seek to become the subjects of an inward change, keep yourselves in the love of God, and rise above the world.

Patient expectation of it. If your faith be so vigorous as to give to distant scenes a luminous distinctness; if your hope is as an anchor cast within the veil; if you have been deprived of many of those objects which formerly wedded you to earth; if you are now the subjects of severe bodily affliction, you may be tempted to be discontented with your continuance on earth, to complain that your stay here is unduly prolonged, and so to wish for an entrance into those brighter and better scenes, as to make your present state unreasonably irksome, and its various *duties* distasteful and oppressive. Hence the necessity of reminding you that you are to look for the Saviour with perfect resignation; that you are humbly and cheerfully to acquiesce in the will of God, whether He be pleased to shorten or lengthen your abode on earth.

Nor is this inconsistent with the most ardent desire. The one is not the negation of the other. You may intensely long for the appearing of Christ, without being impatient for it. The patience you are to exercise is only a qualification of the desire. It modifies, improves and perfects, instead of impairing or destroying what it seems to counteract.

Let none, however, conclude that they are safe because they are not impatient for the appearing of Christ. Your not being guilty of impatience does not imply that you have the grace of patience, with respect to that event. What you call patience may be indifference; as you have not the fitness, and do not feel the desire of which we have been speaking, there is no room for the exercise of patience. So far from your desiring too earnestly the appearing of Christ, the danger results from your not having in your breasts that sentiment at all.

But you who have the preparation, and the desire for His appearing, look for it in the exercise of patience. You know that His coming is certain. 'He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.' And He will come *when* it will be best for His people. He spares you that you may recover strength and secure a full preparation for the event. And in proportion to your sufferings on earth, if endured with resignation to His will, will be your happiness in heaven. Every temptation you now successfully resist, every victory you obtain over the world, will give a loftier note to your song of praise and put another gem in your crown. Be patient, then; your trials will soon be o'er, for 'the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.' Wait patiently, for your work on earth is not yet *done;* instruct, rebuke, exhort, be instant in season and out of season, 'give all diligence to make your calling and election sure,' for 'if ye do things ye shall never fall, etc.,' 'when He shall appear you shall be like Him, for you shall see Him as He is.'